



Parents as Partners

Rock Me to Sleep

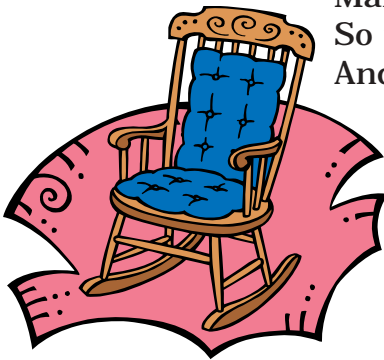
All I can hear are the crickets
And the whistle from some lonely freight
I've been working so hard to make everything right
But for now it'll just have to wait.

'Cause tonight I'd like you to rock me to sleep
I'd like you to sing me a song'
I'm tired of trying to figure things out
And I'm tired of being so strong.

I've never been too good at asking
I'm more apt to do it alone
And it's strange how a lot of us think something's wrong
If we can't do it all on our own.

But tonight I'd like you to rock me to sleep
I'd like you to sing me a song'
I'm tired of trying to figure things out
And I'm tired of being so strong.

It's funny how times when you're hurting
Make what's so familiar seem strange
So when you need help, it's hardest to ask
And it always takes so long to change.



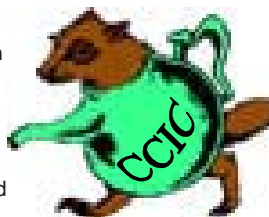
'Cause tonight I'd like you to rock me to sleep
I'd like you to sing me a song'
I'm tired of trying to figure things out
And I'm tired of being so strong.



©Tom Hunter, 1975. The Song Growing Company. Reprinted with permission. From "Bits and Pieces" musical CD and "Rise Up Singing" songbook, available to borrow from CCIC. To hear the melody, go to: <http://www.tomhunter.com/samples.htm>

The Child Care Information Center is a mail-order lending library and information service for anyone in Wisconsin working in the field of child care and early childhood education.

Sponsored by the Child Care Section, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, CCIC has worked since 1986 to provide quality resources to match the need of caregivers and parents.



~ The Badger Teapot,
brewing quality caregiving
sharing quality resources with you ~

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Librarian, circulation: Linda Bather
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A Survey: What Do You Like Best About the CCIC Newsletter?

The purpose of the CCIC Newsletter is to distribute information. We want to find out how good a job it is doing. How useful is it to you? How interesting is it for you?

Please rate the listed sections of the CCIC Newsletter. Your answers to this survey will help us better understand what you think is most important about the CCIC Newsletter. Please mail or fax the survey to CCIC.

Address: 2109 S Stoughton Rd
Madison, WI 53716

Fax: (608) 224-6178

Thank you,
CCIC Staff

	Exceptionally Useful	Very Useful	Sometimes Useful	Not Useful
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News & Views				
Kids Safety News				
Child Care Connections				
CCBC children's books review				
Articles about activities				
Articles about policy				
Articles about trends				
Articles about research				
Articles about philosophies				
Books-to-Borrow				
Videos-to-Borrow				
Brochures				
Resources Elsewhere / websites				
Ordering Instructions				
Comments:				

Some parts of the newsletter are meant to give the information an extra dimension.
How would you rate these?

	Very Relevant	Enjoyable	Okay	Pointless
Editorial				
Ideas				
Graphic art				
Poems				
Quotes				
Cartoons				
Charts				
Comments:				

What part of the newsletter do you look at first when the issue arrives? _____

What part of the newsletter do you never look at? _____

	Often	Sometimes	Never
Have you ever requested copies of articles listed in the newsletter?			
Have you ever borrowed books and videos listed in the newsletter?			
Did the newsletter prompt you to contact CCIC about topics other than the newsletter topic?			
Did the materials help you in your work with children?			
Do you think that you will request materials from CCIC in the future?			
Comments:			

We want to select newsletter topics and materials that match your needs and interests. Please indicate how interested you are in the following topics?

	Very Interested	Interested	Not Interested
Adventure play			
Advocacy			
Brain-based learning			
Business tips			
Career planning			
Child care in other countries			
Child growth and development			
Circle or group time			
Classroom management			
Continuity of care			
Curriculum models			
Encouraging and acting on children's choices			
Equipment			
Family dynamics			
Floor plans and room arrangement			
Physical activity – indoor and outdoor			
Handling transitions			
Hygiene			
Managing learning centers			
Multi-age groupings			
Nature & the outdoor environment			
Personal health and well-being			
Philosophies of education			
Planning & organizing			
Safety & CPR			
Snack time			
Supervising staff			
Talking to and with children			
Team teaching			
Techniques for handling troubling behaviors			
Temperaments of children			
Working with colleagues and supervisors			
Other topics:			

Please check which programs best describe your connection to child care:

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Professional association | <input type="radio"/> Home school | <input type="radio"/> Adult education | <input type="radio"/> Parent resource center |
| <input type="radio"/> Licensed family child care | <input type="radio"/> Special needs | <input type="radio"/> High school instructor | <input type="radio"/> Resource & Referral |
| <input type="radio"/> Certified family child care | <input type="radio"/> Faith-based | <input type="radio"/> Technical assistance | <input type="radio"/> Hospital |
| <input type="radio"/> Licensed group child care | <input type="radio"/> Head Start | <input type="radio"/> Government | <input type="radio"/> Employer |
| <input type="radio"/> Unregulated child care | <input type="radio"/> After School | <input type="radio"/> Student | <input type="radio"/> Administrator |
| <input type="radio"/> Early intervention | <input type="radio"/> CESA | <input type="radio"/> Private consulting | <input type="radio"/> Potential provider |
| <input type="radio"/> 4-year-old kindergarten | <input type="radio"/> County Extension | <input type="radio"/> Public health | <input type="radio"/> Library |
| <input type="radio"/> Elementary school | <input type="radio"/> Camp | <input type="radio"/> Parent | <input type="radio"/> Other _____ |

How long since you began working with children?

- ☐ 0-1 year
 ☐ 1-5 years
 ☐ More than 5 years
 ☐ More than 15 years
 ☐ Haven't worked with children

Leaving Home

A favorite book of caregivers and parents is Robert Munsch's "Love You Forever". It is hard to get through it without becoming misty-eyed. The vision of an old lady getting up in the middle of the night to drive across town to her grown son's apartment in order to rock him to sleep is comforting to both child and parent. Just the anticipation of the changes involved in growing up can cloud the horizon of childhood. The promise that all things will not be lost in the parent-child relationship and the image of continued care calm us so that the dread of separation is diminished.

Eyebrows furrowed, lower lip out, and on the brink of tears, four-year-old Petey leaned against his mother, rubbing his face in her clothes. "What's wrong?" she asked. Looking up at her, he said, "I don't want to go to college."

Surprised by the huge leap to the future, Petey's mother balked, but refrained from laughing. "College? Hmm," she said neutrally. She wondered what had brought that statement on. Fortunately, Petey was able to elaborate. "I don't want to have to move away from home," he added.

Once assured that he could live with Mom and Dad forever and keep his room and all his toys, Petey shed his somber mood, jumped off his mother's lap and returned to his block and hero figure play.

His mother was left to ponder the incident. Her little boy had reached a milestone in his development. He was understanding that life progresses on a continuum and that the expectation is that children do not live with their parents forever. He was beginning to also understand that independence held responsibilities that he did not feel capable of handling. He needed reassurance that he need not be on his own nor live alone nor be strong and brave and grown-up yet.

"Home" is a word that means comfort and belonging for most people. "Leaving home" evokes sorrowful reflections, regardless of how old we are. In time, we realize that "home" is not only a place but also a "sense" that is carried within us.

We can all feel alone and overpowered by life's expectations at any age. Nothing can feel so overwhelming as parenthood. The expectations are great and the preparation is minimal. Working families have heavy pressures on their time, finances, and energy. They need the partnership of their children's caregivers. They need to find "home" again.



As caregivers, we, too, sometimes wish we could crawl up in the lap of a stronger, wiser mentor and hand the situation over to them. What we can do is find support in other caregivers and in the strengths of the families we serve. Several forms of personal problem solving called "technical assistance" are offered to Wisconsin providers. The Child Care Information Center is only one of them. Others are the Child Care Resource & Referral Network, the Wisconsin Child Care Improvement Project, The Registry (Wisconsin's Recognition System for the Childhood Care and Education Profession), UW-Extension Family Living Program, Family Resource Centers, and the Wisconsin Early Childhood Association. A list of these and other organizations may be found on the CCIC website or be requested by phoning CCIC.

Make them your supporters in building the partnerships of families and caregivers so that although providing professional care, you have not left home behind.

—Lita Kate Haddal, editor

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News & Views



The Business Side of Kith and Kin

From *Resources for Child Caring*, June 2006

Those who get paid for caring for children in their home are running a business. It doesn't matter if it's called Kith and Kin, Exempt Care, Legally Unlicensed Care, or Family, Friends and Neighbor Care. It doesn't matter if the person is only caring for relatives, or for one child of a friend. It doesn't matter if the amount of money paid for child care is less than \$100 a year. If money is exchanged for the care of children in the home of the caregiver, then the caregiver must face a variety of business responsibilities.

Kith and Kin caregivers are often unaware of their business responsibilities when they decide to care for children. This lack of understanding can create problems of federal and state taxes, exposure to the loss of homeowner's insurance, greater risks of liability lawsuits, and conflicts with parents over payment.

Taxes

Anyone who earns money caring for children in their home is responsible for reporting this income to the IRS and to their state (in most cases). Caregivers can also deduct business expenses, which will reduce their taxes on this income. If a caregiver is in compliance with their state regulations, she can deduct the same expenses for her business as a licensed caregiver. In other words, if state regulations say that a person is exempt from these regulations if she cares for children from one unrelated family, then this person can deduct the exact same business expenses as a fully state licensed provider. If a state has a system for certifying or registering Kith and Kin caregivers and a person complies with these rules, then the caregiver may deduct all business expenses, which include food, toys, supplies, car mileage, furniture depreciation, and house-related expenses such as utilities, property tax, house rent, house insurance, mortgage interest, house repairs, and house depreciation.

Kith and Kin caregivers who take advantage of claiming all of these business deductions on their tax

return may discover that they have more deductions than their income. In this situation caregivers should not show business losses year after year because the IRS will not allow it. Showing a very small profit each year is acceptable. Some caregivers (grandmothers, for example) may earn little other money besides child care fees, and as a result they may owe little, if any, federal or state income taxes. However, caregivers who show a profit of above \$400 will always owe Social Security taxes.

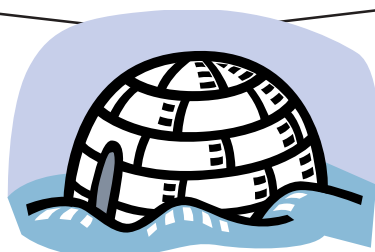
Some Kith and Kin caregivers may also be eligible for other federal and state programs that assist low-income families (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Food Stamps, General Assistance, Supplemental Security Income, and more). The income eligibility for these programs is based on a caregiver's "net income," not their "gross income." "Net income" is defined as business income minus business expenses. As a result of the many deductions Kith and Kin caregivers can claim, their "net income" is likely to be very low and it is unlikely that any benefits they receive from such programs will affect them.

Insurance

Caregivers who bring children into their home expose themselves to greater risks of injury to children, lawsuits, and property damage. Virtually any injury to a child will be the responsibility of the caregiver. Licensed providers can protect themselves by purchasing business liability insurance, but Kith and Kin caregivers generally cannot get such insurance if they do not meet the highest regulation standards of their state. Many assume that their relatives and/or friends will not sue them if their child is injured. This can lead to tragic consequences.

In addition, although some homeowner's policies will cover the home and the contents of the home if the provider cares for fewer than six children, some policies don't provide coverage if the homeowner cares for even one child. In one state a provider's roof suffered hail damage and a contractor was fixing it when he noticed a sign in the window that said "Day Care." The contractor told the insurance company

News & Views



that there was a day care business in the home and the company refused to fix the damage because the homeowner's insurance policy did not cover day care. Most Kith and Kin caregivers have no idea that they may lose their homeowners insurance coverage by caring for just one child.

There is a similar problem with car insurance if a Kith and Kin caregiver is using it on a regular basis to transport children or for other business purposes. Most car insurance policies do not cover providers who use their vehicle on a regular basis in their business or will charge high commercial insurance rates.

Contracts

Even though a Kith and Kin caregiver may believe there is no need to prepare a written agreement with the parent describing the basic responsibilities of parent payment and caregiver work hours, the lack of such an agreement can create problems. Failure by the state to pay for care on behalf of a low-income parent may leave the caregiver in the lurch unless they have a written contract that states that it is ultimately the parent's responsibility to pay for the care. A clear but simple contract can eliminate confusion and make it easier for the caregiver to enforce their agreement.

What Can Be Done

Business responsibilities are probably the last thing that Kith and Kin caregivers think about when they start caring for children. But these responsibilities won't go away, and ignoring them can have significant financial consequences. Caregivers should take advantage of the tax deductions when filing their business tax forms (Schedule C and Form 8829). Caregivers should talk to their homeowner's and car insurance agents about the impact of caring for even one child on their policies, and they should use a contract with parents. Those public and private agencies that work with Kith and Kin caregivers should share this basic business information to help them understand their responsibilities and protect themselves.

For more information see the booklet Caring for Children in Your Home: A Business Guide for Legal Unlicensed Providers. This booklet includes a sample one-page contract that can be used with parents. For questions, contact Redleaf National Institute at 651-641-6675 or rni@redleafinstitute.org. Visit the Redleaf National Institute Web site at: www.redleafinstitute.org.



Addendum from the Redleaf Institute website:

We received the following email from a provider in Wisconsin about last month's article, The Business Side of Kith and Kin. In that article we described some of the business consequences (taxes, insurance, contracts) for caregivers who care for children and are exempt from state regulations. Below is our reply to this email.

Provider's message:

I am a licensed provider that takes training and continuing education every year. I find it a bit disturbing that (in my opinion) you all are promoting the unlicensed providers with tax help hints. They are the ones that are mostly undercutting our business, don't take classes, take on more kids than is legal, etc.... So why would you all feel the need to "help" them with tax tips? I don't feel that they should be able to claim as much things as we do. It should be a perk of being licensed or certified that we can claim "extra" items. I understand they are working too, and trying to provide income for their family, but they should also do it legally and take the required classes and only take in the legal amount of children. I was just really disturbed by the article.

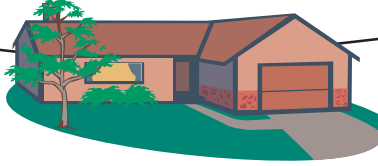
Tom Copeland replied:

I appreciate you taking the time to respond to my article. First, let me clarify that the article was intended to address those providers who are caring for children legally but do not have a state license (grandmother caring for a grandchild, neighbor caring for one child, etc.).

I do not support any provider who is operating illegally.

Read the rest of Tom's reply at: www.redleafinstitute.org

News & Views



T.E.A.C.H. New Scholarship Model Launched October 1!

Peggy Haack, Outreach Coordinator
TEACH Early Childhood WISCONSIN

Our 6-8 credit scholarship model has been re-designed as the **new 3-8 credit model**. Not only is one able to take fewer credits with this new model, but there is a new contract option available in addition to the usual raise and bonus options. The "limited option" allows centers to opt out of paying a raise or bonus and reduce by half the number of release time hours offered with full reimbursement by T.E.A.C.H. (15 hours at a rate of \$10 an hour). If a sponsoring center chooses this option, however, the scholarship recipient does not need to make a commitment to staying at the center for any length of time, but must commit to staying in the field an additional year.

Because the T.E.A.C.H. program is designed to place a scholarship recipient on a career path with a specific goal, this particular scholarship model can only be awarded a maximum of two times, and only once in a given year. So why are we offering it? You could call this the "*You Can Do It*" scholarship model. We want to give teachers and providers who are apprehensive about going back to school the opportunity to discover that they really can do it. Sometimes all it takes is a little encouragement, and one 3-credit course to find out! Similarly, child care centers that have been reluctant to sponsor a scholarship recipient can also discover that they can do it. As they ease into their share of the financial commitment of being a sponsoring center, many will find that the return on their investment is worth it in terms of program quality and staff stability.

The 3-8 credit model was also designed to potentially assist those individuals who are at new Registry Levels 6 and 7 who now must complete 3 credits each year they remain at these levels to be eligible for a R.E.W.A.R.D. stipend. Once a person reaches Level 8 no continuing formal education is required, but of course the incentive remains that a higher level means a larger stipend.

Want to know more? Give us a call today: 608-240-9880 or 800-783-9322, extension 7240, or visit our new and improved website: www.wecanaeysc.org

Characteristics of Effective Teachers

A list of teacher behaviors, skills, and characteristics of successful teachers in early childhood settings was compiled by Gwen Morgan, researcher and nationally known early childhood educator from Wheelock College in Boston. She divided her findings into "structural variables" and "process variables", in other words, what circumstances are different for them and how are their actions different from teachers who are only adequate or poor teachers.

What is special?

Effective early childhood teachers:

- Have college training or degrees and specialized early childhood competencies
- Maintain low child:staff ratios
- Are assigned to small classes
- Break up their classes into smaller activity-based centers



How are they special?

Effective early childhood teachers:

- Have warmth
- Are responsive to children
- Develop positive relationships with children and their families
- Relate to children individually and in small groups, and interact with them one-on-one or organize children in small groups with which they interact while teaching
- Create a cognitively stimulating environment
- Value social and emotional development as essential readiness factors
- Allow children to express their feelings
- Encourage children to talk; welcome and respond to their questions; extend conversations
- Work in partnership with parents
- Are interculturally competent

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Disney at Your Library

Disney Online, part of the Walt Disney Internet Group, has announced it will offer public libraries free subscriptions to Playhouse Disney Preschool Time Online(TM), a safe, ad-free interactive learning experience for preschoolers. Developed in conjunction with education experts, Playhouse Disney Preschool Time Online offers entertaining, story-driven games and activities that teach skills in crucial areas such as letter and number recognition, shape and color identification and counting. Disney Online showcased the service at the American Library Association (ALA) Conference in New Orleans from June 24-27, 2006.

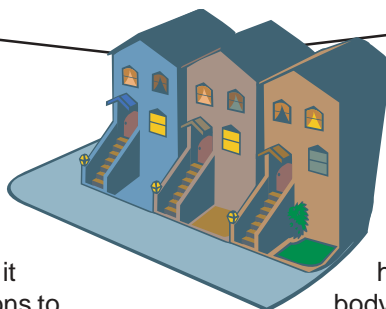
Playhouse Disney Preschool Time Online is hosted by "Bear" from Disney Channel's Bear in the Big Blue House. Bear and other Disney characters lead activities that focus on eight key skill areas including reading readiness, thinking skills, daily living skills, social skills, imagination and self-expression, motor skills, and computer skills. Lessons automatically adjust to each individual child's skill level, keeping preschoolers engaged and challenged. New content is introduced every two weeks, letting each child continue to advance at his or her natural pace.

Librarians can email library@disney.com to request a free subscription or visit <http://www.preschooltime.com/library> for a guide on how to use Playhouse Disney Preschool Time Online in the library. Valid credentials must be provided by each applicant. Ask your local library about it.

-From the DPI Channel Weekly, Vol. 8, No. 41, June 29, 2006

Amber Alert Ticker at dpi.wi.gov/ccic

Check CCIC's website for the latest alerts regarding child abductions from the National AMBER Alert Center.



Watching Weight

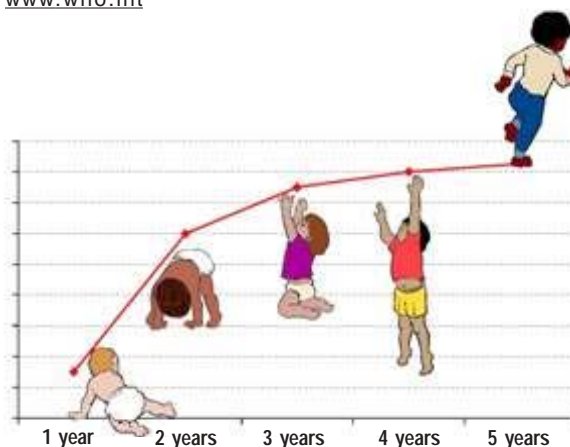
Being overweight is associated with a higher risk of disease, particularly if body fat is concentrated around the abdomen. There are approximately 350 million obese people and over 1 billion overweight people in the world. Over all about 2.5 million deaths are annually attributed to overweight/obesity worldwide.

The estimates have been made using a measure of high body mass index (BMI) calculated as weight divided by height squared. BMI was chosen as a simple measurement of body weight in relation to height because it is easier to measure than body fat. The calculations are done using the metric system. Obese people have a BMI of 30. Overweight people have 25 BMI. The relationship between BMI and death suggests that the ideal BMI is around 21 kg/m². To calculate your own BMI, go to <http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi>

The diseases linked to overweight and obesity include:

- Diabetes type 2
- Ischaemic heart disease
- Stroke
- Hypertensive disease
- Osteoarthritis
- Cancers (colon, kidney, endometrial, and postmenopausal breast cancer)

-Summarized from a report by the World Health Organization, www.who.int



Find WHO Child Growth Standards at:
<http://www.who.int/childgrowth/en/>

News & Views

ECE Policy Research Unit Ends



The Wisconsin Child Care Research Partnership, a unit of Family Living Programs at UW-Extension for the past 6 years, ended on August 31, 2006, due to lack of funding.

Since 2000, the mission of the Research Partnership was to conduct research and evaluation focusing public policy attention on the quality of early care and education for young children in Wisconsin.

Funded primarily by federal Child Care Bureau and state dollars, the Research Partnership provided policymakers and the public with relevant data and evaluation reports on projects such as the Early Childhood Excellence Initiative, the statewide Quality Improvement Initiative, and the scholarship and bonus program of Wisconsin Early Childhood Association. In 2005, the Research Partnership analyzed data and prepared models for instituting a proposed child care quality rating system in the state, and also worked with UW-Extension Family Living Educators to create a training program for the proposed rating system, carried out in many parts of the state.

From 2003-06, the Research Partnership worked with the Department of Workforce Development and other partners to strengthen the child care data system in the state, helping merge data on child care subsidy, child care providers, and educational levels of child care professionals. A major accomplishment of this project was the development of an "Early Care and Education Web Mapping Project" (www.ecemap@uwex.edu) that includes census data, and maps all 10,000 child care locations and 4-year-old kindergarten sites in the state. From 2004-06, UW-Extension was a partner on the Early Education Matters project, funded by the Joyce Foundation through Wisconsin Council on Children & Families, conducting baseline and ongoing research on 4-year-old kindergarten (4K).

Research Partnership team leader Mary Roach, Ph.D., will remain at UW-Extension for one year, to continue the research study of child care indicators under a contract with the Department of Workforce Development and an agreement with Milwaukee County, and to provide leadership on the statewide Strengthening Families project.

Project Manager Diane Adams retired September 1, after 41 years in the child care field, and will devote time to writing/presentations and

travel. Other Research Partnership staff members, Alan Sweet, Jason Bierbrauer, and Angie Broekers, also left UW-Extension. Family Living Program Associate Deb Zeman continues in other support roles within UW-Extension. Dave Riley, Ph.D., co-principal investigator since the start of the Research Partnership, will concentrate his research efforts on parent-child relations and parenting programs and continues his role as Associate Dean and Professor of Human Ecology at UW-Madison.

The web site containing all research and policy reports from the Wisconsin Child Care Research Partnership will be maintained for access by the public at www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/wccrp. For further information, contact: 1-877-637-6188. Print copies of WCCRP policy reports and issue briefs are available from the Child Care Information Center.

Importance of Family Involvement

The Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE) has launched a new series of research briefs on family involvement in education. This evidence-based series, *Family Involvement Makes a Difference*, includes recommendations and innovative ideas for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers in their efforts to create an early childhood system that engages the families of infants and toddlers. The first brief in the series, Family Involvement in Early Childhood Education, synthesizes the latest research on how family involvement contributes to young children's learning and development. (Source: Zero to Three Advocacy and Policy News). The report can be found at: <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/content/projects/fine/resources/research/earlychildhood.pdf>

-From the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families

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Parents Plus



Parents Plus Inc. is Wisconsin's Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC) funded through a United States Department of Education grant. The mission of Parents Plus, Inc. is to support the development of positive parenting skills and to increase parental involvement in Wisconsin schools for the purpose of improving student achievement.

The vision of Parents Plus of Wisconsin is to be recognized as a leader in collaborative statewide and regional efforts to provide home and center-based family support, together with community-based agencies, schools, school systems, and statewide educational organizations.

They seek to assist parents in understanding *Wisconsin State Accountability and Assessment System* and the opportunities afforded regarding public choice and supplemental educational services; and to assist *Schools Identified for Improvement* in developing effective parent involvement policies, practices, programs and activities to lead to student achievements in Wisconsin.

Parents Plus pertains particularly to child care in that they aim to expand and strengthen early childhood *Parents as Teachers* programs in Wisconsin, focusing on parent involvement and school readiness. Parents as Teachers is an international early childhood parent education and family support program that begins prenatally and extends through age 5. The program is designed to enhance child development and school achievement through parent education that is free and accessible to all families in the state of Wisconsin.

It is a voluntary program that provides the families in Wisconsin with the opportunity to receive:

- Personal visits - which occur weekly, bi-weekly or monthly based on the family needs
- Group Meetings - parent group meetings that are informational and/or interactive in nature
- Screenings - periodic screenings for early identification of developmental delays or health, vision and hearing problems

- Resource and Referrals - linking families to needed resources and helping them overcome barriers to accessing those services

In Wisconsin, PAT Parent Educators are trained and certified to use the PAT research based curriculum on their home visits. These visits provide families with appropriate child development information and meaningful parent/child activities focused on enhancing language development, intellectual growth, social development and motor skills. In addition, the Parent Educators assist the family member in becoming a better observer of their child and also to address any questions or concerns of the family member. It is a definite partnership that recognizes the parent as the child's first and best teacher.

To find out more, phone 877 384-1769 or visit <http://www.parentsupluswi.org>

Campaign for Children's Health Care

Parents' Action for Children has joined with other leading nonprofit organizations - including Families USA, National Partnership for Women and Families, Child Welfare League of America, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Federation of Teachers, and many others - to launch the Campaign for Children's Health Care. The campaign is designed to raise awareness about the 9 million uninsured children (and the millions more who are underinsured) and is dedicated to making high-quality, comprehensive, affordable health insurance coverage for all of America's children a top national priority. To learn more about the campaign, go to: www.childrenshealthcampaign.org

To learn more about Parents' Action for Children, formerly the I Am Your Child Foundation, go to www.parentsaction.org or phone (202) 238-4878.

From *What Matters Most: A weekly e-zine for parents in action*

EVERY CHILD'S RIGHT

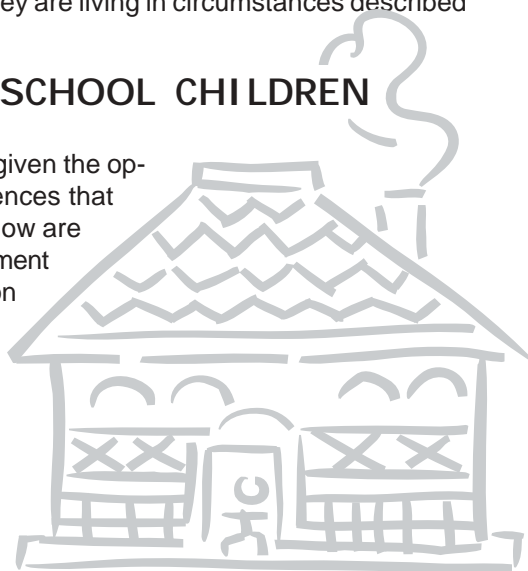
If a child is between the ages of 4 and 20 years, that child has the right to attend school. This is not a given for children experiencing homelessness. Who are these estimated 17,000 Wisconsin children, of whom 41% are preschoolers?

The McKinney-Vento Act defines homeless children and youth as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence. The term includes children and youth who:

- ♥ share the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- ♥ are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- ♥ are living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- ♥ are abandoned in hospitals;
- ♥ are awaiting foster care placement;
- ♥ have a primary night-time residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- ♥ are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;
- ♥ migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

BEST PRACTICE FOR HOMELESS PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

It is important for children experiencing homelessness to be given the opportunity to have early development and enrichment experiences that enable them to improve their social and academic skills. Below are “best practice” recommendations for the identification and enrollment of preschool children from homeless families into early education programs.



- Identification of homeless families in need of preschool education services is more effective when personal relationships exist between community service providers and school district homeless liaisons.
- Collaboration between district staff and community partners not only improves the identification and enrollment of homeless preschool children into early education programs, but also increases the potential for providing additional services and training for staff and parents.
- “Release of Information” forms should be used between community agencies and school districts with preschool programs to help families experiencing homelessness enroll their children into early education programs.
- District staff participation on community interagency councils develops a common understanding of the resources available in the community and enables better coordination of services.
- Efforts to meet the needs of homeless families are enhanced by the involvement of emergency shelter staff and human services case workers on community councils.
- Meeting basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, transportation, health care, safety, and dependable, consistent care by a responsible adult are of primary importance to effectively educate preschool children from homeless families.
- “Child Find” efforts required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) should take into consideration families who do not have a permanent residence. Districts should invite families residing in emergency shelters (domestic abuse and homeless) and transitional housing programs to participate in the Child Find process.

- Relationships between the district homeless liaison and Head Start staff are important toward the goal of identifying and enrolling children into Head Start programs.
- Parents in homeless situations need to be affirmed as the primary educators of their children. Success in school increases when parents are involved in the educational planning and assessment for their children.
- Parents of children in homeless situations need opportunities to strengthen their parenting and coping skills in order to effectively manage stresses related to raising children without the benefit of permanent housing. Programs which offer child abuse prevention, parenting skills, and life skills support both parents and their children.
- Preschool programs which address the needs of parents are the most successful. Community agencies that offer parent support groups and family services (Head Start, Community Action, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Family Resource Centers) should partner with school districts in order to provide more resources to both sheltered and unsheltered families.
- To best meet the needs of preschool children from families experiencing homelessness, staff members from school districts, Head Start agencies, and early education programs should be provided with information about the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act.
- Educators, community service providers, and family advocates need training about how the “culture of poverty” and homelessness impact the educational needs of preschool children.
- Preschool children experience marked progress in their growth and development when they can enroll into early education programs. Transportation services enable the preschool child to have consistent access to quality care and education.
- Planning preschool educational services for homeless families lacking transportation should involve the least amount of transition and travel for the child. There is less cost for the program and more consistency for the child and family when required services are provided at one site.
- Early education environments supporting social and emotional development, as well as academic skills, are the most effective for homeless children. Teachers and early education staffs need training to develop positive strategies to support the social, emotional, and cognitive skills for homeless preschool children.
- District preschools and community-based early education and care programs should align their curriculum and assessment practices with the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards. These standards guide the implementation of programs which aid preschool children from homeless families to develop the social, emotional, and cognitive skills necessary to prepare them for their formal educational years.

-Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2006.

National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week

Each year, one week before Thanksgiving, the National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness co-sponsor National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. During this week, a number of schools, communities and cities take part in a nationwide effort to bring greater awareness to the problems of hunger and homelessness.

If your community has already joined this effort, the Awareness Week Manual can serve as an evaluator for past efforts and possibly offer fresh ideas for the future. If this is your first time participating, this guide will explain how your community can get involved next year!

Go to: <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/getinvolved/projects/awareness/2006manual.pdf>

Further information from the National Coalition for the Homeless is available at <http://www.nationalhomeless.org> and free resources are also available through the National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) at 1-800-308-2145 or <http://www.serve.org>

For a bibliography of Homeless Education Resources by the Virginia Dept. of Education, revised Fall 2006, go to: <http://www.wm.edu/hope/infobrief/bibliography.pdf>

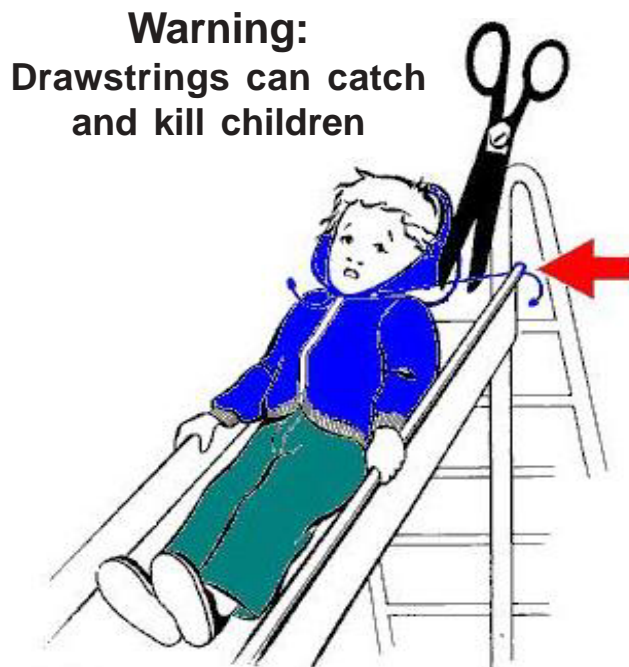
KID'S SAFETY NEWS

Strings Can Strangle Children On Playground Equipment

Clothing strings, loose clothing, and stringed items placed around the neck can catch on playground equipment and strangle children.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has received reports of deaths when these items became caught on playground equipment, especially slides and swings. Items included strings on clothing (such as hoods and attached mittens), loose clothing (such as scarves and ponchos), and other items (such as jump ropes) placed around the neck. These items caught on protrusions, open-ended hooks, gaps, and other parts of playground equipment.

Avoid dressing children in loose or stringed clothing if they will be on playground equipment.



WARNING!

CUT ALL DRAWSTRINGS IMMEDIATELY

Clothing strings, loose clothing, and stringed items placed around the neck can strangle a child. Never dress a child in loose or stringed clothing if they will be on playground equipment.

For more information on safety, contact CPSC at (800) 638-2772 or visit their website: www.cpsc.gov

BUILDING POSITIVE PARENT RELATIONS

Annette T. Fitzgerald
Extension Educator, Home Economist
Cooperative Extension System, University of Connecticut



Children, child care providers, parents and administrators can all benefit from positive parent relationships. Behavior problems can be improved if there is positive interaction between the parent, child, and child care provider. Frequent exchange of information about the child's strengths, progress, and needed changes is essential.

One common bond between parents and child care providers is likely to be lack of time. Parents, child care providers and administrators are pressured by demands at home and at work. Although notes, phone calls, conferences and personal visits absorb precious time from the schedules of administrators and child care providers, the potential rewards are great. Take time to offer a hurried parent a cup of coffee and share personal observations about the child. Respect each other's time constraints by choosing convenient times to get in touch.

The child is a major motivation for most parents to become involved in child care activities, but the day care providers can help other parents by offering opportunities to get involved. Parents who have become part of their children's lives at the child care facility report many benefits for themselves and their children. Those who volunteer to serve on the advisory board or committees benefit by helping shape child care policies, and those who become knowledgeable about their child's performance can offer the child and child care provider much needed support and encouragement.

The following guidelines are recommended to provide positive parent relations:

- ! Outline your program to parents at the initial meeting, indicating goals of the program and parental involvement. Let the parents know about the child's progress through informal communications as well as a *Parent Newsletter*.
- ! Involve the parents in volunteer activities such as fundraising events.
- ! Plan family activities to involve parents and children, such as a picnic or a dinner.
- ! At least once a week try to spend some time talking to each parent.
- ! Be fair to parents as well as children by practicing listening skills and communicating in a positive manner.
- ! Involve parents early in discipline problems to prevent minor problems.
- ! To improve parent-child relationships, sponsor educational programs at your facility.

Involving parents in the child care program may use valuable time but the process will build a quality experience for all involved.

Reprinted with permission from the National Network for Child Care - NNCC. Fitzgerald, A. T. (1996). Building positive parent relations. In Todd, C.M. (Ed.), *Child care center connections*, 5(3), Urbana-Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service.

Success Stories From Real Lives

Partnerships with Families in Family Child Care – Taking Action

Flora Miller, Satellite Family Child Care Provider
Madison, Wisconsin

There is no more positive effect on a child's life than that of a supportive family and community. As providers we understand that through our specialized efforts, caring actions, and open communication with children and parents we're providing a valuable social foundation for the children and families in our care. We do it every day in our work with children! The focus of this article – the Parent Information Exchange – is an extension of this effort. The Parent Information Exchange, or P.I.E., was founded in the spring of 2003 as a family-centered outreach effort – an idea brought to life through the efforts of Satellite family child care providers, staff and parents.

Satellite is a wealth of small communities within itself, for there are over seventy talented and caring providers in this group who offer an extended family on a day-to-day basis. Satellite Family Child Care is affiliated with the Dane County Parent Council and is a high-quality City of Madison Accredited Family Child Care System serving over 300 families in the Madison area.

The idea of the Parent Information Exchange is a theme woven into all family child care programs. As providers and caregivers we have a special opportunity to discuss parenting issues with our child care parents and families. We've all been asked for advice about such issues as potty training, discipline, bedtime routines, etc. The basic goal of P.I.E. is to provide further support and community for our Satellite families by offering opportunities for parents to come together on a regular basis to discuss topics of interest related to child rearing.

P.I.E., with much support from the Satellite staff and other Satellite providers, implemented this program in 2003-2004. Sessions have focused on such areas of interest as "Taking Care of Yourself as a Parent", "Positive Discipline", "Attachment and Self-esteem", "Raising

Children Who Love to Read", and "Potty Training". The five sessions held each year, covering topics chosen through parent input, are scheduled on alternating months from September through May.

Our meetings for the current year are scheduled for Monday evenings at 6:00 – 8:00 with child care provided at each gathering. Each two-hour session includes dinner for parents and children, a half-hour social time for the parents, a 45–60 minute speaker presentation, and a half-hour or so period for parents to present their questions and concerns to the parents, speaker and providers present at the assembly. (Child care is also provided for the parent's children in attendance.) We have been most fortunate to have guest speakers from the Rainbow Project and Child and Family Counseling and Resource Clinic, the Madison Metropolitan School System, the Dane County Parent Council, the Satellite provider group and area early child care professionals.

Two of our committee members – Jill Monson and Shannon Davis – have even made it possible to have our taped sessions aired on FACTv and WYOU, Fitchburg and Madison's Public Education and Government Television Stations. Due to this effort, P.I.E. was awarded an Outstanding Community and Service Award through the Public, Educational and Government Stations of Wisconsin in the spring of 2006. (Taped copies of each speaker's presentation are also available in the Satellite office for parents to check out at their convenience.)

Ideas of how we can better the program continue to be offered and the challenges are always welcomed. For example, the committee has a future goal of providing an interpreter for our Latino families– pending grant support in the upcoming year.

We are in the fourth year of this effort ... which is modeled after a belief of so many childhood educators – "It takes a whole village to raise a child." We have all experienced the strength that comes with such a community. As manager of this effort, I can tell you that there are a number of considerations that have to be made to get this effort off the ground each year. Examples of these challenges include: securing grant monies, reviewing parent surveys and topic ideas, ensuring speakers for each meeting, and locating a meeting site.

Once we realized these many varieties of support existed within our community there was nothing to hold us back!

Working with the committee members has been inspirational! P.I.E. is supported solely through their volunteer efforts! They are: Kim Arias, Julia Chavez, Judi Daggett, Shannon Davis, Chris Douglas, Mollie Driver, Tami DuFrane, Chris Garrett, Diane Meadowcroft, Flora Miller, Jill Monson, Julie Stubbs, Terri Wilson-Carman.

I wish also to recognize the grants and sponsorships that have made our efforts possible: Community Outreach program of Sam's Club, which provided us with the basic funding for our first two years, and the Evjue Foundation, charitable arm of the Capital Times, which allowed us to broaden our efforts the past two years.

Our reward is best expressed by a parent, who after attending several P.I.E. sessions shared, *"I have come home from each meeting with at least a couple of specific, concrete ideas that my husband and I then implemented with our son with at least some success. Perhaps, more importantly, I leave the meetings feeling supported by a community of parents and caregivers who truly care about children and want to support each other."*

40,000,000 Americans are illiterate.*

Family Literacy Means the Whole Family Reads

Family Literacy includes 4 components:

- **Interactive literacy activities between parents and their children.**
- **Parent training on how to be their child's first and most important teacher and how to participate as a full partner in their child's education.**
- **Literacy training for parents that leads to economic self-sufficiency.**
- **Age-appropriate education for children to prepare them for success in school and life.**

*2003 statistics from Nat'l Assessment of Adult Literacy, <http://nces.ed.gov/NAAL/index.asp>

Family Literacy Changes Lives

Student # 1: "I am doing what I'm doing now because I want my child to have a better life than I had. I don't remember having a happy childhood . . . In fact; I don't remember having a childhood at all. Education was not valued in my home. Neither of my parents graduated from high school, and so they didn't encourage their children to do well in school or to finish high school either. I was allowed to skip school whenever I chose to, and I was never encouraged to study.

Since I've been in the family literacy project, I have not only been able to work on my high school completion, but I've been able to provide a safe, caring atmosphere for my child. I realize that unless we make a conscious effort to be different, most of us will tend to be the kind of parents we saw as we were growing up. I don't ever want to end up treating my daughter the way I was treated as a child. The brain development information I am learning will help me in stimulating her to be the best she can.

Not a day goes by that I'm not thankful that God gave me this way to change my life. I sometimes still see some of the people I knew when I was on the streets. They are still living the lifestyle they had back then, and I am so grateful that I was able to escape from that life."

Student #2: "I am just a few steps away from my HSED. I would not be in this position without this program. The family literacy program has helped me so much. We are a rural area: there isn't much for families in our county. And this program not only means a lot to me, but it is a big part of my children's lives, too. They love to see me going back to school.

The teacher (when I was in high school) didn't like me much. When we argued one day, I just left school and never turned back. I was two weeks away from graduation, with my cap and gown hanging in the closet.

When I gave birth to my son, I realized that my role was not only a mother, but also a teacher. Teaching him to do even the little things became my responsibility. After my third attempt at completing my high school diploma, I found the family literacy program."

For help in locating a literacy program near you, go to http://dpi.state.wi.us/title1/esfl_map.html or phone (608) 267-9141.

Contributed by Deborah Schmid, Early Childhood Education Specialist, WI Council on Children & Families. Contact Deborah for presentations on early childhood brain development at (414) 235-4238 or email deborahschmid@wccf.org

Venturing Out: Books about Young Children Exploring Their World

Compiled by Merri V. Lindgren / Cooperative Children's Book Center
School of Education / University of Wisconsin-Madison

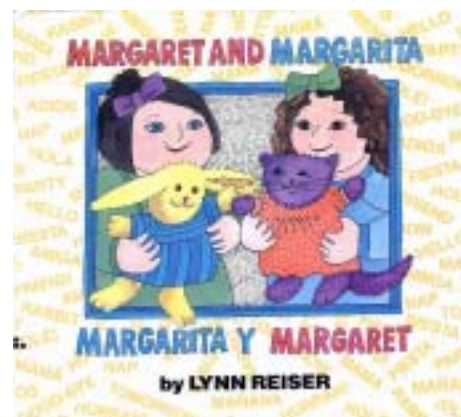
Ask for these recommended books at your local library!

In the neighborhood:

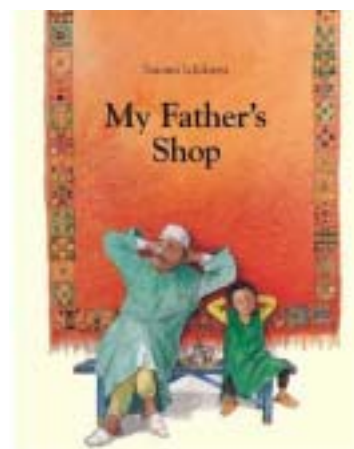
- **Madlenka's Dog** by Peter Sís. Frances Foster Books/Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2002. 32 pages. Ages 3-7. Madlenka, who wants a dog, must rely on her imagination after her parents say no. Madlenka's dog, represented by the red leash and collar that lead Madlenka around the block, may not be visible to readers and listeners, but most children will understand how very real that dog is to Madlenka. So do the shopkeepers on Madlenka's block, whom she visits to introduce her new companion. There are flaps to be lifted on some pages, revealing the dogs and puppies remembered by the adult friends on her block, who come from nations around the world.



- **Margaret and Margarita = Margarita y Margaret** by Lynn Reiser. Greenwillow, 1993. 32 pages. Ages 3-6. Margaret, who speaks English, and Margarita, who speaks Spanish, meet on a trip to the park with their mothers. The language barrier immediately distances the adults (Margaret's mother buries her nose in a book while Margarita's mother concentrates on her knitting), but the two little girls, who at first peer shyly at one another from behind their mother's skirts, soon are chattering away. The openness of young children is warmly depicted in this simple bilingual text. Each mother/daughter pair speaks the same or similar phrases in their own language on facing pages as Margaret and Margarita experience the joy of newfound friendship.



- **My Father's Shop** by Satomi Ichikawa. U.S. edition: Kane/Miller, 2006. 32 pages. Ages 4-7. Mustafa is not all that eager to learn about his family's work selling carpets in the Moroccan city where he lives. He'd much rather play. As his father tries to teach him a few phrases in the foreign languages that are important to their business, a bored Mustafa makes his escape, bedecked in a colorful rug that has been damaged and can't be sold. He attracts the attention of other vendors in the marketplace as well as a brightly feathered rooster. "Kho Kho Hou Houuuu!" calls Mustafa, the sounds for a rooster's crow in Morocco. One by one, tourists from other countries join in, demonstrating the way a rooster crows in their languages—French, Spanish, Japanese, and English. They all follow Mustafa as he returns to his father's shop, where he triumphantly announces, "I can crow in five languages!"



- **One Sunday Morning** by Yumi Heo. Orchard, 1999. 32 pages. Ages 3-6. Minho spends an eventful morning in Central Park with his father. They watch joggers and bicyclists, take a horse-and-buggy ride, ride the carousel, and then head for the zoo. An idyllic day, to be sure, is something that becomes all too clear when Minho awakens in the morning and realizes it was all a dream. Yumi Heo's colorful, skewed perspectives aptly convey the busy city scenes that serve as a backdrop for this story about a Korean-American father and son.

- **Wheels** by Shirley Hughes. (A Tale of Trotter Street) U.S. edition: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1991. 24 pages. Ages 3-8. Trotter Street is full of Spring motion and locomotion. Sanjit Lal has roller skates; Barney, a skateboard; and Mae's baby sister, a stroller. Carlos deals gamely with the disappointment of receiving perfectly fine birthday presents but no bike like his friend Billy's. Mum had warned Carlos in advance about this, but he was completely unprepared for his brother Marco's handmade surprise. This gift and a subsequent neighborhood non-bicycle race exhibit the small moments of high drama at which Hughes excels.



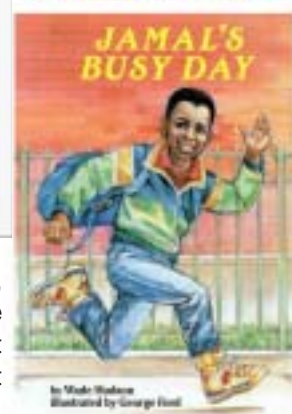
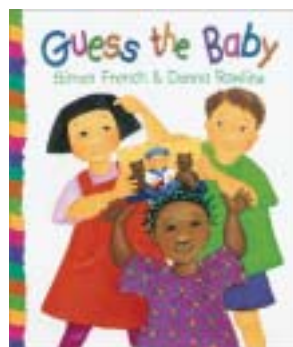
- **Who's Whose?** by Jan Ormerod. U.S. edition: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard/Morrow, 1998. 32 pages. Ages 3-8. Throughout the week, the lives of three families continually intertwine as each one engages in day-to-day activities. Meals, after-school classes, caring for pets, grocery shopping and gardening all become communal events in this urban neighborhood, as friends and family members look out for each other and share their ups and downs. Ormerod's detailed pen-and-ink and watercolor illustrations depict the daily hubbub while her lively text describes the action and invites children to interpret what's going on by asking questions that begin with the word "who?"

At day care & school:

- **Day Care Days** by Mary Brigid Barrett. Illustrated by Patti Beling Murphy. Little, Brown, 1999. 32 pages. Ages 3-5. Children who go to day care centers regularly will feel at home with this rhyming picture story in which a small boy with glasses recounts the typical events of his weekdays, from getting up in the morning and having Daddy help him get dressed to having Mommy tuck him in at night. Most of his day, however, is spent in day care where he plays with friends indoors and outdoors, eats lunch, naps, paints, listens to a story, has a snack and then, one by one, watches his friends go home until Daddy returns to pick him up.

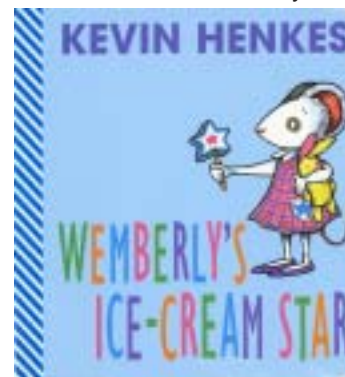


- **Guess the Baby** by Simon French. Illustrated by Donna Rawlins. U.S. edition: Clarion, 2002. 32 pages. Ages 3-5. When Mr. Judd, the teacher, posts his classroom's baby photos, at first all the babies look alike. But closer inspection singles out Jack, because of his curly hair, and another baby has Sacha's unique smile. Mara is recognized by her orange hair, and Anika by her large, dark eyes. Mr. Judd provides pertinent clues to help the class identify a few of the harder photos, but one picture stumps everyone. At last Mr. Judd gives a tip: (This baby grew up to be very handsome. And very clever. But even though this baby is very grown up, he's still at school.) The class catches on, and realizes that even their very adult teacher was once a baby.



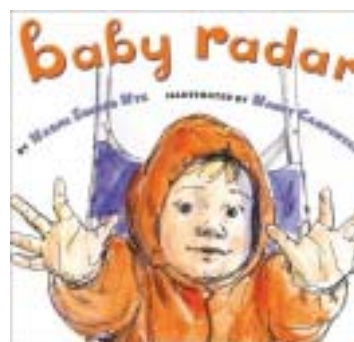
- **Jamal's Busy Day** by Wade Hudson. Illustrated by George Ford. Just Us Books, 1991. 24 pages. Ages 4-6. Jamal's parents work hard all day; his dad as an architect, his mom as an accountant. Like them, Jamal works hard, too, because school is his "job." Readers follow Jamal through a typical day as he works with numbers, does research, attends meetings, helps out his supervisor, etc.—all activities described in terms his parents use for their work, while the illustrations show him in a familiar elementary school setting. The clever interplay between text and pictures distinguish the second title in a series created to enhance the self-esteem of African-American children.

- **My Day, Your Day** by Robin Ballard. Greenwillow Books/HarperCollins, 2001. 24 pages. Ages 2-5. "My day is at day care. Your day is at work. Bye-bye. See you later." Little ones who see these boldly colored illustrations and hear the accompanying short, child-centered sentences will enjoy the immediacy of familiar activities. In the opening and closing sequences, the children arrive at day care and leave their daytime caregivers.
- **Wemberly Worried** by Kevin Henkes. Greenwillow Books/HarperCollins, 2000. 32 pages. Ages 3-7. Young Wemberly worries about almost everything. "Wemberly worried about the tree in the front yard (What if it falls on our house?), and the crack in the living room wall (What if it gets bigger and something comes out of it?), and the noise the radiators made (What if there's a snake inside?)." Her parents and her grandmother do their best to reassure her, but worrying just seems to be part of Wemberly's nature. Wemberly's newest worry is her biggest yet: she's about to start preschool. This looming event generates a whole new list of worries for Wemberly. But her astute teacher, Mrs. Peachum, knows just what to do.



Around town:

- **Baby Radar** by Naomi Shihab Nye. Illustrated by Nancy Carpenter. Greenwillow Books/HarperCollins, 2003. 32 pages. Ages 18 months-4 years. A lively picture book captures all the sights and sounds experienced by a toddler out for an autumn stroller ride. The energetic narrative is firmly grounded in the present moment, creating a marvelous stream-of-consciousness catalog of the young child's observations and feelings: "Giant trees / dropping leaves / in my lap / Spin them around / make them fly!...A tissue from shopping bag...Mama shouts / Not yours! / It's mine / It's mine! Everything's mine!"



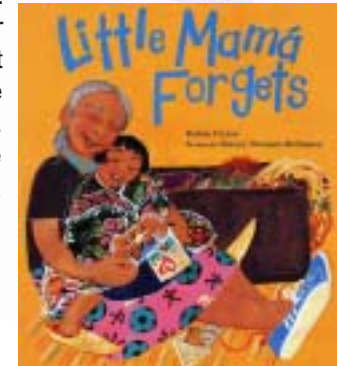
- **Bebé Goes Shopping** by Susan Middleton Elya. Illustrated by Steven Salerno. Harcourt, 2006. Ages 2-5. Wide-awake colors, bold lines, and lots of movement set the stage for Bebé's visit to the grocery store. Like any self-respecting toddler, Bebé views the outing as a chance to experience the market's wares with all his senses, especially taste, touch, and sound! Mamá's hard-pressed to keep up with her little one's grocery cart activities, until she finds the perfect distraction: a box of animal crackers for his mid-day snack. Rhyming words and a liberal dose of Spanish (with glossary) make this over-sized picture book an ideal read-aloud. Young listeners will be captivated by Bebé's romp right up through his exit from the store: "Smiles from Mamá. "Shopping's done! ¡Terminé!" And who's been her wonderful helper? Bebé!"

- **Farmers' Market** by Paul Brett Johnson. Orchard, 1997. 32 pages. Ages 4-7. On summer Saturdays, Laura and her family are up before sunrise to load their pick-up truck with the vegetables they will sell at the farmers' market in Lexington. It is still dark when they arrive at Vine Street to set up their stand and put out the vegetables. As dawn breaks and customers start to file by, Laura helps out by keeping the vegetable baskets on display well stocked. But just before noon, when things have started to slow down, mom tells her that she's earned some free time and Laura runs off to find her "Saturday friend," a girl her age whose mother has a flower stand.

- **Hi** by Ann Herbert Scott. Illustrated by Glo Coalson. Philomel, 1994. 32 pages. Ages 2-4. Waiting in line with her mother at the post office, little Margarita greets every stranger who passes by, only to be ignored. By the time she reaches the front of the line, she has become so dejected that she doesn't even hazard a smile at the postal clerk, so she is pleasantly surprised when the postal clerk greets her first! Glo Coalson's watercolor paintings aptly capture a Latina toddler's many moods, expressed through body postures and facial expressions.



- **Little Mamá Forgets** by Robin Cruise. Illustrated by Stacey Dressen-McQueen. Melanie Kroupa Books/Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006. 32 pages. Ages 3-6. Lucy's grandmother sometime forgets things: that she's toasting bread, or how to tie her shoes, and whether to turn left or right to get to the park. But Little Mamá remembers those things that are most important to Lucy. She remembers how to pour cream on Lucy's pudding, just the way she likes it. She knows how to skip through the park with her granddaughter, and she never forgets to buy Lucy's favorite chili dogs. Most importantly, Little Mamá "always remembers ... to tuck me in with a song and a kiss." Richly-hued illustrations accentuate the loving relationship between Lucy and her grandmother as they celebrate the important moments they share every day. Little Mamá's memory may be failing, but she remains a steadfast pillar in Lucy's young life.



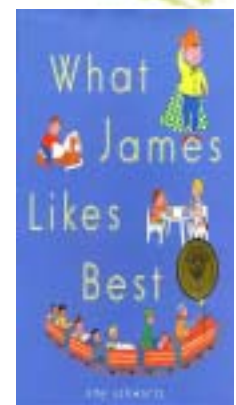
- **Oscar's Half Birthday** by Bob Graham. U.S. edition: Candlewick Press, 2005. 32 pages. Ages 3-6. Oscar's family celebrates his six-month birthday with a walk to their neighborhood park, a rather lopsided cake, and a rousing chorus of "Happy Birthday," sung by family members and the strangers who have gathered around to admire baby Oscar. Although the birthday boy is the center of attention, the real star of the show is his three-year-old sister, Millie, who wears coat-hanger fairy wings on her back and a dinosaur puppet on her left hand, symbolic of her dual nature. "A little more fairy and a little less dinosaur," her mother chides her gently when Millie's play is a bit too vigorous for little Oscar. Bob Graham's depiction of a slightly offbeat, interracial family is right on target: Millie, in her behavior and dialogue, is the quintessential three year old, commanding the attention of both her parents and the book's readers, while Oscar remains, for the most part, completely oblivious to the fuss being made over him.



- **Supermarket!** by Charlotte Doyle. Illustrated by Nadine Bernard Westcott. Candlewick Press, 2004. 20 pages. Ages 18 months-3 years. As families with young children are only too aware, a trip to the grocery store with your offspring in tow can feel like a Herculean task. In this cheerful picture book, a toddler creates chaos during a supermarket outing. The simple rhyming text reads like a shopping list ("Beets. Meats. Ham. / Peanut butter. Jam."), while the illustrations show a youngster tossing the beets to the floor and sampling the peanut butter and jam. From one aisle to the next, he gleefully wreaks havoc, all from his seat in the shopping cart. The beleaguered mother gamely completes her task and the pair escape from the store, leaving a monumental mess in their wake.



- **What James Likes Best** by Amy Schwartz. A Richard Jackson Book/Atheneum, 2003. 32 pages. Ages 2-5. For toddlers and preschoolers, venturing out into the world affords the chance to see and do new things and revel in the familiar. That's how it is for James, the little boy featured in these four brief stories. James takes a bus ride with his mommy and daddy to visit "the twins." He takes a taxi with his parents to visit his grandma and auntie. The family takes a rental car to the county fair, and he and mommy walk to his friend Angela's house for a play date. Each trip is described from a child-centered perspective. At the end of each brief story, the author asks, "And what do you think James liked best?"



strengthening families

THROUGH EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

Families as Partners in Early Care and Education

Mary A. Roach and David A. Riley
University of Wisconsin - Extension

Some early care and education programs figured out a long time ago that if they wanted to optimize children's development, then they needed to collaborate with parents and other family members. But family participation is not always easily achieved, especially when parents have full-time jobs or face challenges of low-income or single parenthood. Some providers may get frustrated when attempting to increase family involvement and may simply give up. We wanted to share some strategies we have learned for strengthening relationships with families from our observations and conversations with directors of Wisconsin's Early Childhood Centers for Excellence.

1. **Create a homey atmosphere.** To encourage family participation, centers must first make parents feel welcome and respected. Comfortable spaces with an array of books, games, and other resources encourage parents to meet informally and create a sense of ownership and belonging. Where possible, having food available can add to this informal, welcoming atmosphere.
2. **Capitalize on opportunities to get connected.** Once parents feel welcome in your program, make sure that daily, two-way staff-parent communication is happening.
 - Do teachers know the names of all of the parents of children they work with? Do they greet parents by name at drop-off and pick-up times?
 - Is there a bulletin board available for parents and teachers to share announcements and other information?
Is there a suggestion box?
 - Do you have a program or classroom newsletter?
 - Do you have book or toy lending libraries?
 - Does everyone in the program always show a respectful attitude regarding parents' culture, abilities, or knowledge in both verbal and written communications?



Empower family members

- Invite parents to drop in for breakfast, snack, or lunch.
- Arrange pot-lucks or other social events that bring mothers, fathers, grandparents and other adults together.
- Encourage family members to become class volunteers or field trip assistants.
- Schedule a time for parents to visit to observe their child for a half-hour then discuss what they observed.
- Use a parent education curriculum to provide parents with suggestions for strengthening children's education at home.
- Let parents participate at the decision-making level by joining a parent advisory group or serving as the program's parent liaison.

Empower children

- By strengthening children's social and emotional skills, parent-child interactions will be more positive and developmentally-appropriate.
- Imagine an evening hosted by children, who demonstrate the use of materials while parents circulate and experience each of the activity areas in the classroom. Switching roles in this way empowers children and helps parents understand what and how their children learn.
- Highlight children's talents. By spotting their own children's art "masterpieces," in public areas, parents can see a tangible expression of being part of the center's daily experience.
- Put up a curtain and put on a show. Giving children a chance to express themselves and discover their talents also provides an opportunity to bring families together.

Empower yourself

- Effective teachers view parents as partners and demonstrate genuine respect for parents as children's most important teachers. A cooperative attitude sets the tone for successful parent-teacher partnerships.
- Staff development workshops can offer concrete suggestions for building parent-staff partnerships.
- Preparing portfolios of each child's work can give you plenty of ideas for when you meet with parents at formal conferences or in informal conversations.

Reference: Hamilton, M.E., Roach, M.A., & Riley, D.A. (2003). Families as Partners in Centers for Excellence. *Child Care Information Exchange*, 150, 14-18.

strengthening families

THROUGH EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

Five Protective Factors that Strengthen Families and Protect Children

Joan Laurion
University of Wisconsin - Extension



1. Parent resilience

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from difficulties. There are two parts to resilience. The first is to be able to recognize and acknowledge difficulties and the feelings that go along with challenging events and situations. The second part of resilience is the ability to have hope, to problem solve and to take action in the midst of difficult events and feelings.

2. Concrete support in times of need

When families are in crisis, the children are more protected if the family gets access to the resources they need relatively quickly. Early childhood care and education professionals may not personally provide those resources but they can provide appropriate referrals and follow-up to families who need immediate support.

3. Knowledge of child development and parenting

Parents with knowledge about parenting and their own child's development have more appropriate expectations and use more developmentally appropriate guidance techniques. Parents learn best when they are talking about their own child right now.

4. Social connections

Whenever a family is isolated from family or community, the children are more at risk. Building trusting relationships with all families and helping isolated families connect with other parents strengthens parenting skills and protects the children.

5. Social emotional competence of children

Children who attend high quality early care and education programs get support for healthy social-emotional development in many ways. They learn how to identify their feelings, empathize with the feelings of others, share emotions appropriately, and problem solve with peers and adults. The children bring these skills home and affect the ways they interact with their families and how others interact with them.

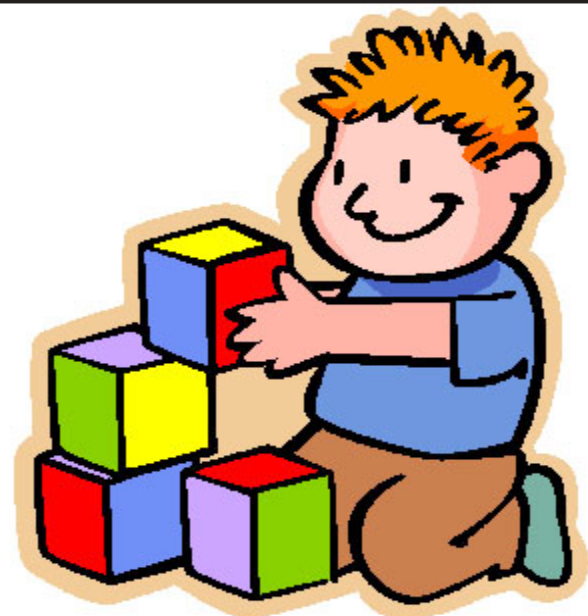
From Wisconsin's Early Childhood

Excellence Programs

Promising Practices: Parent - Teacher Relationships

What We Saw: On the parent bulletin board an attractively bordered, computer generated note is posted describing what the children did in the classroom that day. Pictures of children engaged in activities are also included (they have a digital camera in the center). Each day a new note is posted and the note from the previous day is placed into a 3-ring binder labeled, "What we do in classroom #1". This binder is placed on the parent table outside the classroom. Parents and visitors can look through this binder and get a good idea of what the children are doing each day.

What It Means: Often when parents ask their children what they did all day the answer is "nothing!" By posting each day what the children are doing in the classroom, it gives the parents a great **opportunity to start a discussion** with their child about what happened at school that day. It also **sends the message to parents that the teachers in this classroom have planned, organized activities.**



Items-to-Keep

- articles, booklets, brochures, factsheets -

Building Literacy

1. **Get ready to read!: Family child care literacy checklist.** 2004. National Center for Learning Disabilities, Inc. Providers and parents share the important responsibility of founding children's reading habits and love of books. The ability to read goes hand-in-hand with success in school and later life, besides offering children a wonderful way to rejuvenate and visit the worlds of fantasy, knowledge, and adventure. How does your program measure up? [Available at: http://www.getreadytoread.org/images/stories/downloads/fam_childcarechecklist_rev.pdf]
2. **Get ready to read!: Classroom literacy checklist.** 2004. National Center for Learning Disabilities, Inc. See above annotation. Measure your preschool classroom literacy potential. [Available at: <http://www.getreadytoread.org/images/stories/downloads/classroom%20literacy%20checklist2006.pdf>]
3. **Get ready to read!: Home literacy checklist.** 2004. National Center for Learning Disabilities, Inc. See above annotation. A checklist for parents to measure the presence of reading tools in the home. [Available at: http://www.getreadytoread.org/images/stories/downloads/home_checlist_rev.pdf]
4. **Parent-infant attachment: The cradle of literacy.** Claudia Quigg. Baby Talk, 2006. Early relationships become the groundfloor of all communication. In fact, children are already working on language during the final trimester of their mothers' pregnancies when they can hear as much as 60% of what goes on around them. The important infant months are a "laboratory" for experimenting with behaviors, such as crying, cooing, and cuddling. Understanding what attachment means in children's development can help parents accept the behaviors that go with separation anxiety and toddler aggression, and support the daily routines that eventually build literacy skills. [Available at: www.babytalk.org/materials/topics/essay-attachment.htm]



Family Diversity

5. **Examining the origins of our beliefs about parents.** Sue Grossman. Childhood Education, Fall 1999. What influences our expectations of parents and how can we be more helpful and less judgemental of them?
6. **Sharing the care: What every provider and parent needs to know.** Amy Laura Dombro. Children Today, March 1, 1995. There will always be disagreements between parents and providers, but working together for the good of the child can have a lasting influence and is the basis for good caregiving.
7. **When "Grandma" is "Mom": What today's teachers need to know.** Andrea B. Smith, Linda L. Dannison, & Tammy Vach-Hasse. Childhood Education, Fall 1998. The home-center connection is extra important when grandparents are the custodians of a child. Providers need to be especially helpful since the circumstances which led to the care arrangements continue to impact the emotions and energy of the family.
8. **Presenting a positive view of adoption: Parts 1 & 2.** Rita Blockman, Doris Houston, & Phyllis Picklesimer. Adoption as another example of diversity in a child care setting. Not to be hidden, adoption is to be explored and celebrated. Positive attitudes are promoted, such as considering adoption a *method* of entering a family, which could be comparable to Caesarean-delivery. Beyond this, the article deals with the emotions of loss, rejection and grief that adopted children will feel at different stages that must be recognized by caregivers and parents, and how to support children as they work through their emotions. [Available at: www.canr.uconn.edu/ces/child/newsarticles/FCS513.html & www.canr.uconn.edu/ces/child/newsarticles/FCS52333.html]
9. **Adopted children.** D.A. Borchers. From *Adoption: Positive strategies for early childhood educators*. Early Childhood Health Link, Spring 2004. A compact reader-friendly article regarding activities in early childhood settings to be sensitive about and behaviors that may appear in adopted children.

10. **The dynamics of families who are homeless: Implication for early childhood educators.** Kevin J. Swick. Childhood Education, Spring 2004. 40-50% of the homeless in the U.S. are families and 30% are single mothers with children under the age of five. Quality child care is a tremendous boost to the parents' self-esteem when providers exhibit responsive and supportive attitudes.

Conferencing

11. **Partnerships for learning: Conferencing with families.** Holly Seplocha. Young Children, September 2004. Conferencing with parents is a responsibility of child care providers. It can be done formally or informally, but there are some rules outlined here which are good to follow. Some things to remember are to begin and end with a positive message, be organized and limit your presentation of the child's abilities to a few examples, and encourage parents to share what they know about their child.
12. **Using children's texts to communicate with parents of English-language learners.** Soyoung Lee. Young Children, September 2006. Parents who are non-English speakers need to communicate with child care and school programs in non-traditional ways. Indeed, parents of today may not respond as well to parent nights and open houses as the parents of a generation ago. This article shares an example of how one teacher opened the way for home-classroom communication, whereby both mother and teacher discovered the reasons for a boy's behavior and an understanding of his thoughts. Finding out more about the child boosted his morale and the resulting parent participation helped everyone.
13. **Tips for successful parent-teacher conferences.** Angie Dorell & Jenne Buffington. Early Childhood News, August/September 2001. A one-page list of reminders for setting up your formal parent-teacher conference schedule and keeping them on track in a 15-20 minute time slot.

Building Positive Relationships

14. **Building positive relationships with parents.** Stephen Green. Family Child Care Connections, Vol.14, Issue 2, 2005. A basic presentation of the reasons why caregivers must communicate with parents and how the child benefits from the exchange. Tips and ideas for how to improve parent involvement in your program. [Available at: http://fcs.tamu.edu/families/child_care/newsletters_family/fcc_wologo/fccvol14_2wologo.pdf]
15. **Lessons from family home providers: Ideas for training staff.** Margie Carter. Child Care Information Exchange, January/February 2005. Wisconsin family child care providers helped the author with materials for this article. Their ideas for bringing comfort and home to any center can help build the bonds between home and center by increasing the "happiness" factor for everyone: parents, children and staff.
16. **Cultivating good relationships with families can make hard times easier.** Linda Groves Gillespie. Young Children, September 2006. Active listening techniques are described.
17. **Working together.** Chris Koehler. 1991. University of Massachusetts Cooperative Extension. Child care providers can use this simple list of questions with parents of children new to their program. It helps to evaluate if the parents and caregiver share the same beliefs about children. Spanish version listed below. [Available at <http://www.nncc.org/Families/work.together.html>]
18. **¿Como trabajar juntos?** Chris Koehler. 1991. University of Massachusetts Cooperative Extension. En esta sección aprenderás: Cómo ayudar a los padres y a sus hijos a adaptarse al programa de una guardería; cómo debe llamarte el niño que vas a cuidar; que esperan los padres de ti; y cómo hablar con los padres sobre su hijo o hija. [Available at <http://www.nncc.org/Business/sp.trab.juntos2.html>]

Family Involvement

19. **Family fun calendar.** Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin. English. A plan for a family activity for every day of the year. [Available at www.preventchildabusewi.org/packet/FUNCAL06.pdf]
20. **Calendario de diversión familiar.** Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin. Spanish version of the Family Fun Calendar. [Available at <http://www.preventchildabusewi.org>]

21. **Creating a father-friendly environment: How can you get fathers involved in your program?** James A. Levine. Child Care Information Exchange, January/February 2004. Make sure you have images of men up in the classroom and that you find out what the men in the families you care for are interested in. When you have a parents meeting or an event, make sure the invitation is extended to them and that they have heard the message. Let them know that you notice them!



22. **Involving fathers in the preschool classroom.** Laura McFarland. Texas Child Care, Fall 2000. In this article, the results of a study on how fathers become involved in a classroom are put into practical terms that explain briefly the typical barriers fathers experience and why their involvement is shown to be so important.
23. **Dad: You're important.** Texas Child Care/Texas Parenting News, Winter 2004. A parent handout letting fathers know how important they are to their children and suggesting things to do together with them.
24. **Improving parental involvement: Ten tips for success.** Laverne Warner & John Barrera. Texas Child Care, Summer 2003. Organizing an effective parental involvement program begins with a philosophy statement and planning activities that support the values and beliefs of the families in your program. Other tips are to act on the interests of parents by planning parent programs around those topics and to train staff in communicating appropriately with parents.
25. **Families make a program.** Lisa Durkin, Ed. Everyday TLC, November 15, 2004. Make parents a curriculum resource; ask them to tell about their jobs, join you on a fieldtrip, swap recipes, and more.
26. **10 tips to stay involved with your children during deployment.** Are You Aware? - ChildCareAware, March 15, 2004. Parent handout for the parent who is serving in the military and separated from a child. [Available at: <http://www.childcareaware.org/en/areyouaware/articles.php?id=10>]

Ways to Communicate

27. **Planning an open house.** Cathy Abraham. Texas Child Care, Spring 2004. An open house offers parents a chance to socialize with you and each other on a less stressful occasion than drop-off, pick-up and conference times. It is a chance for you to market your program, spotlight the successes of your children, and offer parents a chance to be involved. Planning is important for the success of the event.
28. **Tips and tools for creating e-newsletters.** Tir Walker. Child Care Information Exchange, September 2006. Using the Internet to send a newsletter to parents is an efficient and effective way to bring messages to them. It can serve as a tool for documenting program progress and educating parents on child development issues. A website can serve as a bulletin board for discussion, policy posting, a calendar, and a chance for parents to interact outside of the rush of the daily routine. There are many sites to go to for ready-made and copyright-free materials.
29. **Keys to quality print communications: Publishing a newsletter.** Laverne Warner & William. H. Strader. Young Children, July 2002. You may find that you like working with words and can help your professional organization or a local child advocacy group spread their message through a newsletter. This is a 9-step instruction guide for creating, compiling, distributing and funding a newsletter.
30. **Say what you mean: Mean what you say: Why consistency matters.** Texas Child Care/Texas Parenting News, Summer 2006. This sample of *Texas Parenting News: A quarterly newsletter for parents everywhere* may be reproduced and sent home with parents. Included in Texas Child Care magazine. [Available at www.childcarequarterly.com]
31. **Parent handbooks that help sell your program.** Texas Child Care, Summer 2006. How to introduce your program and present your policies in a reader-friendly way.

32. **Parent bulletin boards: Communicate with style.** Cathy Abraham. Texas Child Care, Winter 2005. Ten steps to making a more captivating bulletin board for posting information you want parents to read.
33. **Making memory albums.** Ellen Booth Church. Scholastic Early Childhood Today, May 2006. "Put memories of the year together into individual albums that children can take home."
34. **Family day homes: Get organized with information systems.** Mindy Dague. Texas Child Care, Spring 1999. An excellent "to-do" list for getting necessary information and center paperwork organized, thereby avoiding home/center miscommunication.
35. **Parent/family questionnaire.** Sharon Storm Eiselen. From *The Human Side of Child Care*, 1992. NAEYC. Sample of a one-page parent feedback form to check whether your program is meeting the basic communication needs between home and center.
36. **Welcome to the provider-parent partnerships website! Childcare providers joining with parents to support children's well-being.** Opening page of an informative and user-friendly website which offers guidance for both providers and parents on how to work together. Designed to help providers better understand the needs of parents, grandparents, and guardians, it is the source of many parenting education handouts for providers to give to parents. [Available at: www.ces.purdue.edu/providerparent/index.htm]
37. **A hands-on approach to nurturing the parent partnership.** Edna Wallace. Early Childhood News, August/September 2001. Good ideas for staying in contact with parents, from visiting the families' homes to making a suggestion box.
38. **Communicating with parents.** Margie Carter. Child Care Information Exchange, July 1996. Explains the term "quality of knowing" which child care providers should be introducing parents to. Providers need to invite busy parents and families to see their children in a new light and appreciate your program more by using new tactics, such as posting a question rather than a daily report. The question, "Ask your child what turtles eat?" will start a daily report delivered in the child's words and with excitement over the activity which took place earlier in the day.

Solving Problems Together

39. **Building a business: Have parents sign a contract.** Texas Child Care, Winter 2003. A reminder of what to include in your contract and policy statement and why.
40. **Provider-parent negotiations.** Emily Johnson. NNCC Connections Newsletter, Vol.3, Issue 1, 1993. When parents consistently bring or pick up children late, bring sick children to your child care center, or other situations that show they are not following your policies or honoring their contract, you need to talk through the issues with parents in a non-aggressive but matter-of-fact way. [Available at: www.nncc.org/Families/fdc_31parent.provid.negot.html]
41. **Handling complaints and solving problems.** Lesia Oesterreich. From *Iowa Family Child Care Handbook*, 1993. Techniques for conversing with parents and bringing up problems that need to be discussed. [Available at: www.nncc.org/Families/hand.complnt.html]
42. **Handling possible problems.** Chris Koehler. 1992. National Network for Child Care Family Day Care Facts Series. Read these good reminders about your professional behavior when your temper is bubbling and you feel a parent is criticizing you. [Available at: [Families/hand.pos.prob.html](http://www.nncc.org/Families/hand.pos.prob.html)]
43. **When you have a problem.** Nancy Morse. Day Care Center Connections, Vol.1, Issue 6, 1992. Choosing the time to discuss problems with parents is critical to a positive outcome. Children should not overhear nor be discussed in front of other children. Do not blame. Listen to parents. [Available at: www.nncc.org/Guidance/dc_16when.problem.html]



44. **What do I say to parents when I am worried about their child!** Judith S. Bloch. Early Childhood News, August/September 2000. This article explores the viewpoints of parent, child and staff in looking at problems in child development in order to help providers anticipate likely reactions from parents. The “do’s” and “don’ts” of communicating sensitively with parents are outlined.

45. **Talking to parents about problems in development.** Saraswathy Ramamoorthy with Judith A. Myers-Walls. Provider-Parent Partnerships Web site. 2006. Delays or abnormalities in a child’s development can be very painful for parents to admit, let alone discuss. This article lists what you need to do to ready yourself for that important discussion. [Available at: <http://www.ces.purdue.edu/providerparent/Parent-Provider%20Relationships/TalkingAboutDev.htm>]

46. **Communicating sensitively with parents.** Saraswathy Ramamoorthy with Judith A. Myers-Walls. Provider-Parent Partnerships Web site. 2006. Listening is the most important element in a conversation with parents. The way you talk to parents is important. [Available at: <http://www.ces.purdue.edu/providerparent/Parent-Provider%20Relationships/CommunicatingSensitively.htm>]

47. **Talking with parents about normal age-related fears.** Giselle Goetz with Judith A. Myers-Walls. Provider-Parent Partnerships Web site. 2006. You are the expert when a parent comes to you with concerns about a child. Handle it encouragingly. [Available at: <http://www.ces.purdue.edu/providerparent/Child%20Growth-Development/TalkingwParentsNormalFears.htm>]



Attachment and Separation

48. **The problem-solving parent: Bonding, a family affair.** Eleanor Reynolds. Early Childhood News, October 2000. A one-page parent handout in everyday wording about the importance of strengthening the family by making time for rituals and traditions, and not allowing television to supply children with the values that parents should be instilling in them.
49. **Parent-child-caregiver: The attachment triangle.** Bettye Caldwell. Child Care Information Exchange, January/February 2005. Parents are often burdened with guilt and anxiety for their child. This can manifest itself in the way they express their concerns to you which in turn can prompt defensiveness and territorialism on the part of the provider. Understanding each other is the first step to avoiding unnecessary confrontations.
50. **The emotional ties between parents & children.** University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension. 2006. Attachment is a two-way activity and the process of helping a child form the important capacity to “attach” or bond with another person can be done by many. In the relationship dance, parents and caring adults can initiate positive behaviors in natural ways such as smiling and responding to a child’s hunger. It is important that caregivers also care for themselves. [Available at: www.arfamilies.org/family_life/human_development/emotional_ties_parents_children.htm]
51. **I’ll be back for you: Making separation easier.** A brochure about how to ease a child’s transition into child care/preschool. [Available at: http://dpi.wi.gov/ccic/pdf/ill_be_back.pdf]
52. **Helping children grow: Attachment and independence.** Cindee M. Bailey. Oregon State University Extension Service. January 1988; reprinted February 2006. Adults were once told that picking up a crying baby was “spoiling” them. It can now be proved that responding to a child’s cry forges indelible brain paths that are necessary for healthy emotional development. The more a baby is loved, the more loveable and secure he or she becomes.

Divorce

53. **Divorce.** Nithyakala Karuppaswamy with Judith A. Myers-Walls Provider-Parent Partnerships Web site. 2006. Divorce is a family condition that providers and teachers need to be prepared to encounter in working with families. The stages will be evident in the contact providers have with the family and the behaviors they observe in the children. The following articles are each gentle, helpful guides for talking with parents during this difficult time in their family cycle. [Available at: <http://www.ces.purdue.edu/providerparent/Family-Child%20Relationships/Divorce.htm>]
54. **Providers talking with parents about divorce.** Nithyakala Karuppaswamy with Judith A. Myers-Walls Provider-Parent Partnerships Web site. 2006. This is a difficult time and families may rely on you to be the stability in their child's life as they go through this transition. [Available at: <http://www.ces.purdue.edu/providerparent/Parent-Provider%20Relationships/ProvidersTalking.htm>]
55. **Children's reactions to divorce — ages and stages.** Nithyakala Karuppaswamy with Judith A. Myers-Walls Provider-Parent Partnerships Web site. 2006. [Available at: <http://www.ces.purdue.edu/providerparent/Family-Child%20Relationships/ChildrensReactions.htm>]
56. **Visitation Do's and Don'ts.** Nithyakala Karuppaswamy with Judith A. Myers-Walls Provider-Parent Partnerships Web site. 2006. As a provider, you need to know when the child will go home with one parent or the other parent. A calendar from the parents would let you know whom to call and whom to expect to pick up the child. You also can help the child adjust by telling her who will pick her up each day. Be careful not to get caught in the middle. [Available at: <http://www.ces.purdue.edu/providerparent/Family-Child%20Relationships/VisitationDosDonts.htm>]
57. **Children and divorce: How staff can manage the aftermath.** Caulynn Burton. School-Age NOTES, January 2001. Over half of all marriages end in divorce. The most important thing school-age staff can do is to help children cope with the change in their lives in ways which should be outlined in the framework of the center's formal policy. Staff can help children manage their emotions by giving them a chance to talk and exercise control over other things.
58. **Resources.** Nithyakala Karuppaswamy with Judith A. Myers-Walls Provider-parent Partnerships Web site. 2006. A list of helpful books about divorce for preschoolers, early elementary school-age children and parents. [Available at <http://www.ces.purdue.edu/providerparent/Family-Child%20Relationships/Resources.htm>]
59. **Children and divorce: Internet resources for parents.** Nithyakala Karuppaswamy with Judith A. Myers-Walls Provider-Parent Partnerships Web site. 2006. Parent handout about how to communicate with their child's provider and access resources on the Internet that will help them talk to their child about their divorce. [Available at: <http://www.ces.purdue.edu/providerparent/PDF%20Links/Children%20and%20divorce.pdf>]

Setting Boundaries

60. **Crossing lines in parent relationships.** Anne Stonehouse & Janet Gonzalez-Mena. Child Care Information Exchange, March/April 2006. Having favorites among the children and parents you work with is not uncommon but inappropriate if unequal attention and service is given to other families.
61. **Helping parents and children in difficult situations.** Saraswathy Ramamoorthy with Judith A. Myers-Walls. Provider-Parent Partnerships Web site. 2006. It is very upsetting witnessing an angry parent scolding a child. Here are some suggestions for turning your powerlessness in this situation into acceptable actions. [Available at: http://www.ces.purdue.edu/providerparent/Parent-Provider%20Relationships/Helping_Parents_DifficultSIT.htm]
62. **Does the child need counseling?** Nithyakala Karuppaswamy with Judith A. Myers-Walls. Provider-Parent Partnerships Web site. 2006. Sometimes a provider must recognize that the child has a problem that is too big to be handled in the center alone and needs the help of an expert. [Available at: <http://www.ces.purdue.edu/providerparent/Family-Child%20Relationships/ChildCounseling.htm>]

63. **Parents or pop-culture? Children's heroes and role models.** Kristin J. Anderson & Donna Cavallaro. *Childhood Education*, Spring 2002. Parents and other family members are important role models for children, especially in early childhood, however characters in the media also are admired by children whether they are good models or not. Adults in the lives of children need to beware of this and be active in children's lives.

Preparing for School

64. **Preparing preschool children for the transition to kindergarten.** Rae Ann Hirsch. *Early Childhood News*, May/June 2006. A preschool teacher/child care provider should have school readiness goals in mind for the soon-to-be school-agers in the group. Helping parents with practical knowledge of school procedures, school selection, and staff contacts can also be a big help. Parents need information about meaningful activities they can do as a family to build a child's emotional development as critical preparation for school.
65. **Successful transition to kindergarten: The role of teachers & parents.** Pam Deyell-Gingold. *Early Childhood News*, May/June 2006. This is the story of a collaboration of Head Start and the PTA to create "best practice" guidelines for transitioning to kindergarten from preschool that families, preschools and schools work on together. Classroom styles were assessed, as were parent preparation and child preparation.

Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect

66. **Protecting children by strengthening families: A guidebook for early childhood programs.** Strengthening Families Through Early Care and Education, Center for the Study of Social Policy, April 2004. 112 pages. Booklet about the Strengthening Families approach to community involvement in protecting children, the principles on which the framework is built and how it can be implemented locally. "An early childhood program that reaches out to parents may well be the best child abuse and neglect prevention strategy." [Available at: www.cssp.org/uploadFiles/handbook.pdf]
67. **Child care as a setting for helping to prevent child abuse and neglect.** Nancy L. Seibel & Linda Gillespie. *Child Care Information Exchange*, May/June 2006. 3,000,000 American children were referred to Child Protective Services in 2002 for suspected abuse and neglect. The most common perpetrator of abuse is a child's relative. Child care providers may be the first to recognize the signs of abuse and be called upon to intervene by reporting the abuse. It is better, however, if the abuse can be prevented in the first place by supporting families under stress. As a part of the Strengthening Families Initiative, trainings for child care providers and preschool staff have been developed in how to interact proactively with families at risk of abuse.
68. **Building circles, breaking cycles—Preventing child abuse and neglect: The early childhood educator's role.** NAEYC. 2003. Brochure and discussion guide. This brochure helps early childhood educators realize they have a role in preventing—not just reporting—child abuse and neglect. Practical examples are given of how the Strengthening Families framework will help educators use their knowledge and skills to support families in ways that can help prevent harm to children. Includes a list of print and video resources. NAEYC will supply their members with up to 50 free copies. Spanish version listed below. Single copy only from CCIC. [Available at: <http://www.naeyc.org/ece/pdf/Duke.pdf>]
69. **La construcción de círculos, la ruptura de ciclos.** NAEYC. 2003. Spanish version of brochure and guide annotated above. [Available at <http://www.naeyc.org/ece/pdf/DukeEsp.pdf>]
70. **Breaking the silence: Helping battered moms and their children.** Texas Child Care, Winter 2000. What is domestic violence and why does it happen? The "do's" and "don'ts" of telling what you know and 5 things to keep in your message when talking with a mother who is being physically abused.
71. **Circle of parents. Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin.** Information about the parent support group and self-help program for parents to reduce anger. [Available at: www.preventchildabusewi.org]



Books-to-Borrow



Building Relationships with Families

72. **50 Early childhood strategies for working and communicating with diverse families.** Janet Gonzalez-Mena. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006. 144 pgs. 50 strategies to create a climate of partnership and trust in family-centered, inclusive early childhood programs that respect and honor differences in families and individuals.
73. **Building relationships with parents and families in school-age programs.** Roberta L. Newman. Nashville, TN: School-Age Notes, 1998. 96 pgs. Staff training activities and tip sheets, plus tools school-age programs can use to communicate with families.
74. **Circle of love: Relationships between parents, providers, and children in family child care.** Amy C. Baker. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 1998. 130 pgs. Sometimes parents want caregivers to love their children, but they become unsettled when the love is mutual and the children become attached. This book shows how caregivers can love and bond with children and yet soothe parents' fears of losing their children's affection.
75. **Help! for teachers of young children: 88 tips to develop children's social skills and create positive teacher-family relationships.** Gwen Snyder Kaltman. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2006. 165 pgs. 42 entertaining stories contain good advice about preparing parents and children for school, creating a team relationship with parents, and making the most of parent-teacher conferences.
76. **How you are is as important as what you do ... in making a positive difference for infants, toddlers and their families.** Jeree H Pawl and Maria St. John. Washington, DC: Zero to Three, National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families, 1998. 44 pgs. A parent and a caregiver might talk about a toddler with trust in each other or with suspicion and fear, in a quiet comfortable corner or on the run when one or both are distracted or fatigued. These very touching stories help you think about "how you are" with children and their families.
77. **Infant/toddler caregiving: a guide to creating partnerships with parents.** Sacramento, CA: CA Dept. of Education, 1990. 94 pgs. How caregivers can develop partnerships of mutual trust and respect with families of infants and toddlers.
78. **Parent relations: Building an active partnership.** Redmond, WA: Exchange Press, 1994. 48 pgs. Classic articles from the magazine *Child Care Information Exchange*. Ideas on improving parent/staff communication, meeting the needs of single parents, handling parent complaints, dealing with separation issues, running parent conferences, and understanding and strengthening the partnership between parents and teachers.
79. **Parent-friendly early learning: Tips and strategies for working well with families.** Julie Powers. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2005. 111 pgs. How to avoid problems with parents, understand the background for each issue, handle any conflict that occurs, and move toward true partnership with parents.
80. **A place to begin: working with parents on the issues of diversity.** Dora Pulido-Tobiassen and Janet Gonzalez-Mena. Oakland, CA: California Tomorrow, 1999. 128 pgs. A resource for partnering with parents to create a more just and equitable society, and to raise children who feel good about who they are and who learn to appreciate and respect people who are different. Contains rich information, anecdotes, exercises and tools, lots of handouts for parents and staff.

81. **The power of questions: Building quality relationships with families.** Rebecca Parlakian. Washington, DC: Zero to Three, Center for Program Excellence, 2001. 11 pgs. Describes the look, listen and learn model, a reflective approach that those who work directly with parents and children can use to form relationships with families. Includes ideas for setting boundaries and managing your reactions to families in complex interpersonal situations.
82. **Relationships, the heart of quality care: Creating community among adults in early care settings.** By Amy C. Baker and Lynn A. Manfredi/Petitt. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2004. 200 pgs. Young children thrive when the special adults in their lives have warm, caring relationships with each other—parents with caregivers, caregivers with directors, and caregivers with coworkers. This book uses personal stories to describe relationship-based child care and the attitudes and policies that foster the development of good relationships in centers.
83. **Tender care and early learning: Supporting infants and toddlers in child care settings.** Jacqueline Post & Mary Hohman. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press, 2000. 384 pgs. Caregivers need to record observations of children, especially during the infant-toddler period, and share these stories with parents. Share them sensitively though; let parents and families be the recorders of a child's milestone events, such as the child's first step, sitting up alone, the first word. Unintentional pain is inflicted by a provider proudly reporting to a parent a momentous "first" occasion. The child will perform it again so let parents see it themselves and report the "first" that they witness to you.

Family-Friendly Communication

84. **The essential parent-workshop resource.** Michelle Graves. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press, 2000. 180 pgs. All you need for 30 dynamic workshops for parents of preschoolers. Some workshops cover specific High/Scope principles, but most are on topics of general interest to parents.
85. **Family-friendly communication for early childhood programs.** Kathy Morrison. Washington, DC: NAEYC, 1996. 117 pgs. A collection of 93 engaging articles to use or adapt for newsletters, family packets, parent-teacher conferences, bulletin boards, parent handouts.
86. **From parents to partners: Building a family-centered early childhood program.** Janet Keyser. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2006. 155 pgs. Focuses on communication tools such as newsletters, bulletin boards, parent conferences, special events, and support networks to keep family members involved in a child's care and education.
87. **The parent newsletter: A complete guide for early childhood professionals.** Sylvia Reichel. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2006. 101 pgs. This practical, how-to guide on creating a newsletter to parents includes advice on design and layout, effective articles, scheduling and distribution.
88. **Partnering with parents: Easy programs to involve parents in the early learning process.** Robert E. Rockwell, and Janet Rockwell Kniepkamp. Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 2003. 320 pgs. Complete plans for 27 family meetings that involve the entire family—children and adults—in hands-on curricular activities at various learning stations.
89. **Spreading the news: Sharing the stories of early childhood education.** Margie Carter and Deb Curtis. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 1996. 64 pgs. Visual displays are a great way to tell parents about the growth of a curriculum idea and the changes over time in children's thinking, understanding, and skills in the classroom. This book tells how to make attractive and informative documentation panels by combining story captions with photographs of children in action. Includes color photos of many examples.

Working Out Developmental Issues

90. **Between teacher and parent: Supporting young children as they grow.** Adele M. Brodtkin. New York: Scholastic, 1994. 64 pgs. Each of these 45 columns from *Early Childhood Today* magazine gives an example from the lives of preschool and kindergarten children to illustrate the importance of the parent/teacher relationship.

91. **How culture shapes social-emotional development: Implications for practice in infant-family programs.** Monimalika Day and Rebecca Parlakian. Washington, DC: Zero to Three, Center for Program Excellence, 2004. 26 pgs. Explains the process of cultural reciprocity, a framework for resolving cultural dilemmas.
92. **Love you forever.** Robert Munsch. Illustrated by Sheila McGraw. New York: Firefly Books, 1986. 32 pgs. This illustrated favorite depicts unconditional love that continues throughout life between parent and child. A young mother rocks her baby and sings, "I'll love you forever, I'll like you for always, As long as I'm living, My baby you'll be." At book's end, a grown-up son rocks his elderly mother and croons the same words back to her. A great bedtime read-aloud book. Hear it read at: <http://www.robertmunsch.com/books.cfm?bookid=40>
93. **How does it feel?: Child care from a parent's perspective.** Anne Stonehouse. Redmond, WA: Child Care Information Exchange, 1995. 69 pgs. This guide describes what a partnership is and is not. It then uses amusing cartoons to illustrate 30 child care situations and asks teachers to imagine "How would you feel if you were a parent?"
94. **So this is normal too?** 2nd ed. Deborah Hewitt. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 1995. 141 pgs. To help teachers and parents work out normal developmental issues in young children, this book gives child development information on 16 difficult behaviors (such as tattling, lying, and biting), suggests actions to be agreed to by both parent and teacher, and gives a well-designed parent/provider planning form for each behavior.

Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Child Rearing

95. **What should young children learn?: Teacher and parent views in 15 countries.** David P. Weikart. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press, 1999. 283 pgs. A questionnaire about expectations was given to teachers and parents of 4-year-olds in Belgium, China, Finland, Greece, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Nigeria, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Thailand, and the United States. The responses reveal what teachers and parents expect preschool-aged children to learn. The findings also suggest how teachers and parents view each other's priorities and responsibilities, how well they communicate, and how they form their beliefs about what is important for children.
96. **A world of babies: Imagined childcare guides for seven societies.** Alma Gottlieb. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. 280 pgs. The chapters in this book are written as seven manuals on child-rearing from seven different parts of the world. They show in an enjoyable way that child-rearing is always determined by culture and history, and an extraordinary variety of beliefs and practices can produce healthy, happy children.

Home Learning Activities for Parents and Children

97. **Einstein never used flash cards: How our children really learn—and why they need to play more and memorize less.** Kathy Hirsh-Pasek and Diane E Eyer. Emmaus, PA: Rodale, 2003. 302 pgs. Uses compelling research to debunk the myths spread by the accelerated-learning industry. Shows parents how to nurture a child's love for learning through play and thus foster initiative, creativity, curiosity, empathy, and self-esteem.
98. **Everyday matters: Activities for you and your child.** Washburn Child Guidance Center. Circle Pines, MN: American Guidance Service, 1997. In English and Spanish. 110 pgs. Short, simple activities parents can do with their preschool children. Activities are described in clear, everyday language and divided into five areas: discipline, self-esteem, language development, coordination development, and infant care.
99. **Idea bags: Activities to promote the school to home connection.** Sharon MacDonald. Torrance, CA: Fearon Teacher Aids, 1999. 106 pgs. Idea bags are brown paper lunch bags filled, not with homework, but with fun activities parents can use at home to help further their preschool children's learning.

100. **Idea bags for the kitchen: Activities to promote the school-to-home connection.** Sharon MacDonald. Grand Rapids, MI: Fearon Teacher Aids/McGraw-Hill Children's Pub., 2002. 90 pgs. All the reproducibles needed to create 30 idea bags, brown paper lunch bags filled with simple recipes parents can prepare at home with their kids to help reinforce math, language, and science concepts.
101. **Keepers: Learning activities for families for under a dollar.** Janis D. Berg. DeForest, WI: DeForest Public Library, 1995. 73 pgs. The Keepers described in this book are 52 self-contained learning activity kits that make it easier for parents and caregivers to provide reading readiness activities for their preschool children. Using the patterns and instructions given, the kits are put together by volunteers for under a dollar each, and they include all the ingredients to do a learning activity in science, social studies, math, or writing.
102. **Makers: Family literacy activities based on children's literature.** Janis D. Berg and Judith Ecker. DeForest, WI: Cranesbill Publishing, 1996. 92 pgs. The Makers in this book are 50 self-contained craft kits based on classic children's literature. Using the patterns and instructions given, volunteers inexpensively put together the kits to send home with parents of preschoolers. Prompts are included to help parents talk with their child about the story as they do the activity.
103. **Makers: Family literacy activities based on Mother Goose nursery rhymes.** Judith A. Ecker and Janis D. Berg. DeForest, WI: Cranesbill Publishing, 1996. 84 pgs. The Makers in this book are 50 self-contained craft kits based on nursery rhymes and Mother Goose. Using the patterns and instructions given, volunteers inexpensively put together the kits to send home with parents of preschoolers. Nursery rhymes and prompts are included to help parents talk with their child about the nursery rhyme as they do the activity.
104. **Right at home: Family experiences for building literacy.** Merrily P. Hansen and Gloria Armstrong. Menlo Park, CA: Addison-Wesley, 1993. 48 pgs. A family involvement program in the form of letters to be used at home by parents of preschool or kindergarten-age children with activities designed to develop early literacy skills.
105. **En el seno del hogar: Experiencias familiares para desarrollar el alfabetismo** (Right at home: family experiences for building literacy). Merrily P. Hansen. Menlo Park, CA: Addison-Wesley, 1993. 48 pgs. See above annotation.
106. **Talking with your baby: Family as the first school.** Alice S. Honig and Holly Elisabeth Brophy. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1996. 150 pgs. Written to help low literacy parents and parents for whom English is a second language enhance the language and development of their children at home and through daily routines.
107. **Teaching your child to love learning: A guide to doing projects at home.** Judy Harris Helm. New York: Teachers College Press, 2004. 143 pgs. A project is an in-depth investigation of a topic that is interesting to children. A project may be child or teacher initiated, but its informal, open-ended activities follow the children's interests and focus on finding answers to the children's questions. This book tells parents how to use the project approach at home.
108. **Transition magician for families: Helping parents and children with everyday routines.** Ruth Chvojicek. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2001. 103 pgs. Written to help early childhood teachers support the families in their programs by giving them good ideas for everyday transitions and routines. Includes outlines for two transition workshops for parents.
109. **You make the difference in helping your child learn.** Ayala Manolson. Toronto: Hanen Centre, 1995. 90 pgs. This wonderful guide uses practical advice and illustrations to help parents connect with the feelings of babies and young children. Shows how to use the 3a way in many situations to promote children's communication skills: allow your child to lead, adapt to share the moment, add new experiences and words.
110. **Usted hace la diferencia para que su hijo pueda aprender** (You make the difference in helping your child learn). Ayala Manolson. Toronto: Hanen Centre, 1996. 90 pgs. See above annotation.

Audiovisual Materials-to-Borrow



- 111. BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN TEACHERS AND FAMILIES.** Seattle, WA: Harvest Resources, 2003. VHS, color, 21 min. + trainer's guide. Two child care teachers attempt to create a true community with families, to move into relationships that sustain and nourish everyone involved. They explain how they use ideas from Reggio Emilia and the Chicago Commons Child Development Program to make classrooms inviting for families and offer families ways to connect beyond the usual meetings.
- 112. CULTIVATING ROOTS: PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILIES.** (The Early Childhood Program: A Place to Learn and Grow, Tape 7.) Washington, DC: NAEYC, 1996. VHS, color, 22 min. Young children benefit when their teachers and parents have good two-way communication and collaboration. This video suggests ways to foster partnerships between families and schools serving children ages three through eight, including a family involvement program and one classroom's home visits project.
- 113. DIVERSITY AND COMMUNICATION.** (Diversity, Tape 3.) By Janet Gonzalez-Mena. Barrington, IL: Magna Systems, Inc., 1996. VHS, color, 33 min. + workbook. Role-playing sessions show parent-staff disagreements over toilet training and dirty clothes. We see communication blocks and escalating arguments, threats and power plays. But we also see ways to negotiate, keep communication channels open, and create connections.
- 114. DIVERSITY AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT.** (Diversity, Tape 4.) By Janet Gonzalez-Mena. Barrington, IL: Magna Systems, Inc., 1996. VHS, color, 27 min. + workbook. Recommends a practical process called RERUN to open up communications between parents and teachers or caregivers: Reflect... Explain... Reason... Understand... Negotiate.
- 115. ESSENTIAL CONNECTIONS: TEN KEYS TO CULTURALLY SENSITIVE CHILD CARE.** (The Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers.) Sacramento, CA: California State Department of Education, 1992. VHS, color, 36 min. + booklet. Because children from birth to three are in the initial stages of forming a sense of self, they are particularly hurt by negative messages about their cultural identity. These ten recommendations about program structure and interpersonal give-and-take will help you strengthen children's connections with their families and their home culture.
- 116. INVOLVING FAMILIES IN ACTIVE LEARNING SETTINGS.** Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press, 2001. VHS, color, 23 min. + viewer guide. Scenes from a variety of High/Scope classrooms show 12 key ways to create a home-like atmosphere that welcomes family members and is accepting of each child's family experiences and culture.
- 117. LEARNING BEFORE SCHOOL: HOW PARENTS CAN HELP.** Lake Zurich, IL: Learning Seed, 2003. VHS, color, 19 min. + guide. Shows how to give kids a head start in three key areas: communication, self-discipline, and curiosity. Skills in these areas are far more crucial than getting a jump start on reading or math.
- 118. LEARNING THROUGH OBSERVATION: FIVE VIDEO VIGNETTES TO SPARK REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION.** Washington, DC: Zero to Three, 2003. VHS, color, 65 min. + guide. This training video shows real-life interactions between professionals and families: an occupational therapist's home visit with a child with special needs, morning drop off at a child care center, professional supervision, a home visit with a Spanish speaking family (in Spanish with English subtitles), and an Early Head Start home visit. Discussions featuring Jerree Pawl, Nancy Seibel, and Adrienne Sparger follow each vignette, and discussion questions are presented for further exploration and reflection.
- 119. LISTENING TO FAMILIES.** (The Whole Child: A Caregiver's Guide to the First Five Years, Tape 6.) By Joanne Hendrick. South Burlington, VT: Annenberg/CPB Project, 1997. VHS, color, 27 min. + faculty guide. Communicating with families of children from birth to age five. Ways to help families deal with everyday problems and life crises.

120. **PARENT PARTNERSHIPS: PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS TOGETHER.** (Relationship-based Child Care for Babies and Toddlers, Tape 3.) Van Nuys, CA: Child Development Media, Inc, 2002. VHS, color, 26 min. + guide. Filmed at the Lady Gowrie Child Centre in Adelaide, Australia, this video brings up discussion topics that will help staff teams reflect upon their current communication with parents and help them develop center systems to ensure that all parents receive quality communication and are included in decision-making which affects their child.
121. **PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHANGE: BUILDING SKILLS FOR FAMILY SUPPORT.** Pittsburgh, PA: Family Communications, Inc., 1998. 2 VHS, color videotapes, 54-min. total + facilitator's guide for 8 hours total training. This is a training workshop in four modules for parents and staff members in family support centers. Each module requires a two-hour group session for 15 to 25 participants, and each group should include both staff members and parents. Ideally, the workshops should be conducted separately but in sequence and no more than one week apart, but the materials can also be used during a one-day, eight-hour training. The training workshops are designed to build the attitudes and skills that will help family support center staff members and parents begin to form meaningful partnerships, emphasize strengths rather than weaknesses, speak up to articulate needs and share ideas, and reach out to the larger community on matters of concern to families and children.
122. **PROTECTIVE URGES: WORKING WITH THE FEELINGS OF PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS.** (The Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers.) Sacramento, CA: California State Department of Education, 1996. VHS, color, 27 min. + booklet. This video shows how caregivers can come to better understand the normal behaviors of parents of infants in care, including highly emotional behavior and conflicting feelings about caregiver-child relationships. The tape first focuses on how caregivers can help parents with their fears and concerns and then suggests how caregivers can deal with their own feelings.
123. **PROTECTIVE URGES TALKING POINTS.** (The Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers.) Sacramento, CA: California State Department of Education, 1998. VHS, color, 33 min. + booklet. Supplementary video clips to help trainers structure group discussion with caregivers about the video **Protective Urges: Working with the Feelings of Parents and Caregivers**. Dr. Alicia Lieberman points out that parents who were not taken care of as children can violate the expectations of those of us who were taken care of and call up feelings of visceral rage. Three caregivers discuss various situations and feelings with Dr. Lieberman in order to further understand and resolve difficult parent/caregiver relationships.
124. **PUTTING PARENTS AT EASE: NINE KEYS TO EFFECTIVE PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES.** By Jim Fay. Golden, CO: Love and Logic Press, 1998. 3 compact discs, 3 hrs total. A teacher's greatest nightmare has to be the unannounced arrival of an angry, demanding, and unreasonable parent. Whether unexpected or planned in advance, parent conferences are often stressful events. Jim Fay shows teachers how to make parents comfortable in the school setting, how to move them out of emotional states into thinking states, and how to become the child's allies.
125. **SEVEN WAYS TO BUILD STRONG RELATIONSHIPS.** Washington DC: Zero to Three, 2001. VHS, color, 22 min. + guide + book *Partnering with Parents to Support Young Children's Development* by Jeree H. Pawl and Amy L. Dombro (43 p.) This tape and book make up *The Learning & Growing Together with Families Video Package*, designed to help home visitors, early intervention specialists, Head Start staff, and child care providers learn specific ways to build strong, collaborative relationships with families and with colleagues, relationships based on self-awareness, sensitive observation, and flexible response.
126. **A THREE-WAY CONVERSATION: EFFECTIVE USE OF CULTURAL MEDIATORS, INTERPRETERS, AND TRANSLATORS.** Boulder, CO: University of Colorado, 1999. VHS, color, 20 min. Many tips on how professionals in a variety of educational and intervention settings can use cultural mediators, interpreters, and translators to help them effectively support, understand, and communicate with the diverse types of families needing services.
127. **UNDERSTANDING THE PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS.** (Let Babies Be Babies, Tape 5.) Winnipeg, Manitoba: Family Day Care Association of Manitoba, 1993. VHS, color, 16 min. + guide. Introduces issues of understanding, respect, and communication through the thoughts and experiences of both parents and caregivers. Discusses way of exchanging information and supporting each other on behalf of the children.
-

Ideas

By Tante Lita



Add a touch of class to your parents meetings

Invite parents, teacher(s) or community members to perform musical entertainment for your families and staff attending meetings at your center. The listeners will appreciate the uplifting addition to the program which will bless the spirit of the gathering and relax the atmosphere.

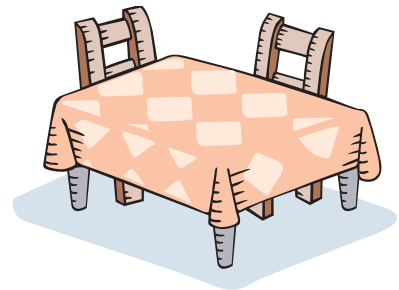


Daily reports

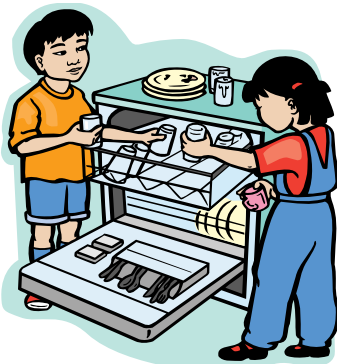
Invest in a digital camera for your center. Deduct it on your taxes as a business expense. Print same-day pictures of the center activities and post them on your parent bulletin board before pick-up time as a daily report to parents of the fun their children are having at your center.

Decorating the center

Instead of covering the light from windows with fabric curtains, clip colorful napkins to the curtain rod to form a valance of many filmy paper squares. These can be changed frequently and children can help with the inexpensive selection.



Assign fun names to chores, such as Kitchen Queen or Shoe Sheik, to grant children ownership of the jobs while engaging their imaginations!



Enhancing playground potential

To add moveable props to the playground environment, contact a local wholesale outlet for soda pop or beer to see if they can supply you with empty plastic crates. These are usually not expensive. Only choose crates that stack well and are undamaged. These are usually in vibrant colors. If the logos do not appeal to you, duct tape over them. A supply of 50 crates will excite your children and inspire a flurry of construction activity. They also make excellent seating for outside circle time.

Parenting the First Year is a newsletter series by UW-Extension explaining the stages of infancy and the issues emerging at each month during the baby's first year. Copyright free and reproducible at: <http://infosource.uwex.edu/subheads.cfm?headingid=6>

Wisconsin Child Care Improvement Project (WCCIP)'s *Scrapbook of Children's Environments*

When you watch this DVD you will see hundreds of places where children play, learn, and grow. This collection of photographs illustrates many concepts that can help you "fine tune" your classroom environments. Order this and other resources at: <http://www.wccip.org/store.html#scrapbook>

State Licensing Memos on the Internet

Licensing has created a new listserv for their memos. Sign up to have memos sent directly to your email address at: http://www.dhfs.wisconsin.gov/dsl_info/signup.htm

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Find any recipe, decide how many servings you need, choose measurement in cups and tablespoons or grams and deciliters. Recipes reviewed by users and given star ratings.

The University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Media Collection is a collection of about 1350 videos, CD's, DVD's, slide sets, audiocassettes, skillathons and displays. This centralized source of audiovisual materials is for the use of Cooperative Extension agents in Wisconsin and their clients, which include families and child care providers.

From the website, <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/media/catalog/childcar.html>, one can search for materials by title, item number, or subject category and then use the posted forms to order materials or call 1-800-353-3514. Included in this collection is the excellent video workshop series: Better Kid Care.

Mary O'Connor has responsibility for overall management of the collection. If you need information about the materials, or have any questions or problems concerning them, please call her at (800) 353-3514 or (608) 262-3514. Materials may only be requested by Cooperative Extension faculty and staff in Wisconsin and only for use in UWEX-conducted programs. To help defray operating costs, counties are charged a handling fee of \$3 per title for all materials borrowed for use in Cooperative Extension-conducted programs.

Talk to your local Family Living Program about borrowing materials. To find out who your FLP agent is, phone (608) 263-1095, or visit the website at: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/countymap.cfm>

UW-Extension Financial Education Center

Phone: 608/ 261-5077

Website: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/dane/flp/FinancialEducation.html>

Address: 2300 S Park Street
Madison, WI 53713

Mission: To be a "one-stop-shop" community resource offering integrated financial education classes, counseling, and referrals to community programs and services.

Situation: There is a consensus regarding the need to teach people about managing personal finances. Clearly, there is a continuum of need from the many families in our community who are working at low-wage jobs that do not pay enough to meet their basic expenses, to others who have enough income but experience financial distress due to poor financial management. It is essential that families who are resource constrained get connected to the services for which they are eligible.

Program Description: The Financial Education Center is located at the Villager Mall in the heart of south Madison. The objective of the center is to increase the financial literacy skills of residents in Madison and Dane County thereby empowering them to achieve financial security. This is accomplished by offering consistent, reliable and integrated financial education through classes, one-on-one guidance and various programs and services in a central and familiar location. Although the primary focus is to reach low and moderate-income individuals and families, the center is open to anyone interested in enhancing their financial education.

Some of the Classes Offered:

Money for food. Learn how to save money at the grocery store, plan meals and get the most from your food budget.

Understanding your credit report. Why is your credit rating so important? What can you do if there is a mistake on your credit rating? What can you do to improve your credit rating?

Rent smart. Learn important tenant information: how to check out apartments and landlords, understanding the rental agreement, and communicating with your landlord.

Identity theft. Learn steps you can take to prevent having your identity stolen.

Make your money talk (led by the WI Women's Business Initiative Corporation). A free personal money management workshop series to give you the ability to save money no matter what your income is by creating your own budget, developing a savings plan, and dealing with past and future credit.

Postscript: Quality Care

The majority of today's parents attended child care themselves and are using child care during their own children's preschool years. The majority of today's parents have had a television present in their homes throughout their lives. Although Mister Rogers said, "We learn about parenting from our own parents", the leading parenting models of today may well be those of child care providers and television characters.

The responsibility of child care providers to model excellence and provide high quality caregiving is greater now than ever before. What we call "good parenting" by parents, we call "good practice" or "appropriate practice" by child care providers. The quest to define what excellence is and what high quality care looks like is an ongoing process of exploring and practicing caregiving behaviors.

The Work and Family Institute did a study of caregiving quality several years ago. The outcome of the survey given to parents and providers was a list of three traits both groups agreed represented quality care. They were:

1. The caregiver's **relationship with the child**
2. The caregiver's **communication with parents**
3. The caregiver's **training and education**

The interesting finding from this research is that of the three quality factors listed, one of them impacts the others; that is the training and education of the caregiver. For that reason, we are trying hard in the early childhood profession to help each other find opportunities for training and learning experiences.


"Quality child care enables a young child to become emotionally secure, socially competent, and intellectually capable. The single most important factor in quality care is the relationship between the child and the caregiver. Children who receive warm and sensitive caregiving are more likely to trust caregivers, to enter school ready and eager to learn, and to get along well with other children. The quality of caregiver-child relations depends in part on the sensitivity of the caregiver and in part on the ratio of caregivers to children, the

Dr. Catherine Donahue, film maker and vivacious professor at Wheelock College in Boston, shares: *I had an idea last week after talking to one of my students about family day care. She started to tell me that she was in family day care [as a child] and it was really rough. She said "Like sands through the hour glass..." and we knew we were going down for naps - whether we needed them or not. At 1 p.m., the soap 'Days of Our Lives' came on and the provider was in front of the TV." She told me other scary stories about her care during that time. (She was clearly traumatized by it since she was under three years of age when she was there and remembers it). I thought this is it! I want to do research on film, so I am thinking of interviewing the first group of children who experienced the "Family Day Care" system (early 1980's)- those that chose to pursue teaching as a profession. May explore this - I want to make a film to help people (parents, etc.) about quality day care and what it means to children when it isn't good.*

Sharing our stories is one way we raise the level of quality in not only our caregiving, but in the quality of care expected by parents. Today's parents and caregivers can not reproduce the same types of childhoods for their children as they had. Society is much altered and we are all seeking new ways of raising resilient, secure and engaged children. We cannot rely solely on what we knew worked for childhoods of the past. But when we continue to learn about child development and good practice, child care providers and educators become knowledgeable resources for busy parents. We are rewarded by warmer relationships with the families with whom we work and have greater satisfaction in the job we do. By regarding each other as partners in founding the "village" that will eventually raise each child, parents and caregivers can find solutions together to the ups and downs of life with children so that, in truth, *"we learn about parenting from our own parents" and child care providers!*

- Lita Kate Haddal

number of children in a group, and the education and training levels of the caregiver. A quality program also attends to the basic issues of health and safety and emphasizes a partnership between parents and caregivers. Children who receive inadequate or barely adequate care are more likely later to feel insecure with teachers, to distrust other children, and to face possible later rejection by other children." (Carnegie Corporation of New York. 1994. Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children.)



Mister Rogers said, "We learn about parenting from our own parents."

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- Items are sent a few at a time, depending on when they become available and whether you still have items checked out. Items featured in newsletters are popular and you may have to wait to receive them. Let us know if you will accept a substitution or need information on this topic immediately.
- If you have dates by which you need materials, let us know. We will try to meet your timeline.
- Phone to renew your materials.
- You may borrow the items through interlibrary loan at your local public or academic library—but check the charge policies of an academic library—and go to your local library to pick up and return the book or tape.

♥ **Articles are yours to keep.** Articles, brochures and factsheets do not need to be returned.

♥ **Ordering.** Identify the newsletter issue number and the item number. Tell us your name, center name, address, and phone number.

Sample: "Hi, I'd like to order items from Newsletter 52. My name is Wanda Luvview. I'd like articles 15, 19, 26 through 30, books 79 and 101, and video number 114. Send them to Home and Hearts Child Care, 123 Play Circle, Center City, WI, 54321. My phone number is 123-123-4444."

♥ **Save and circulate your newsletters!** You may need to order materials in the future. Give everyone a chance to read it and order materials useful to them. Store it where all staff can refer to it when needed. Feel free to duplicate the newsletter if more copies are needed for your staff.



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